
From: Anna Lee Hirschi [annalee@mjfortexas.com]
Sent: 1/13/2020 11:09:36 AM
To: Anna Lee Hirschi [annalee@mjfortexas.com]
Subject: MJ Hegar Clips 1/13/2020

Press Clips

1/11 Democrats campaigning for U.S. Senate blast Abbott on refugees By Jonathan Tilove [Austin American Statesman]

Texas' Democratic candidates for U.S. Senate, who gathered Saturday for a joint forum at a Houston church, joined in condemning Gov. Greg Abbott for becoming the first in the nation to reject the resettlement of refugees in the state under a Trump administration order in September that required states and municipalities to give written consent before allowing in refugees.

Former U.S. Rep. Chris Bell of Houston noted, as Abbott has, that Texas resettles more refugees than any state in the nation, but he said Abbott's conclusion that Texas had already done more than its fair share was not in Texas' best interest.

Instead, Bell said, "Gov. Abbott decided to give our state a giant black eye."

"We see that Gov. Abbott is choosing to play politics with the lives of refugees, people fleeing violence or real suffering," said Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez, an activist who co-founded the Workers Defense Project and Jolt, an organization that works to increase voting by young Latinos.

Grassroots activist Sema Hernandez of Pasadena, who finished second to then-U.S. Rep. Beto O'Rourke in the 2018 Democratic primary for U.S. Senate, said Abbott's refusal to accept additional refugees was particularly unseemly because so many of those refugees were, she said, a direct result of U.S. military and economic policies.

"This is the damage we have inflicted in over four decades, 40 years, of neoliberal policies," Hernandez said.

Annie Garcia of Houston, the founder of the nonprofit OpHeart, which supports children born with life-threatening illnesses, said Abbott's action "makes us a bad actor on a global scale."

In announcing his decision, Abbott said, "Texas has been left by Congress to deal with disproportionate migration issues resulting from a broken federal immigration system."

State Sen. Royce West of Dallas said the answer is not to close the door on new refugees but to enact comprehensive immigration reform.

"How can we have an immigration policy where we're taking kids and putting them in cages," West said.

Front-runner Hegar absent

The forum at Green House International Church in Houston was sponsored by six Houston-area Democratic clubs.

It was, organizers said, the largest gathering of the Democratic field at a single forum. But, while 10 of the 12 candidates were present, notably absent was MJ Hegar of Round Rock — who, according to an organizer, said she had a scheduling conflict.

Hegar, who ran a strong but losing race for Congress in 2018 against Republican Rep. John Carter of Round Rock, is the closest thing to a front-runner in the jumbled field of Senate candidates — in part because in December the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, under the direction of Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, blessed her with its endorsement.

Before the program began, Houston-area attorney Chris Hollins, the vice chair of the Texas Democratic Party, offered words of welcome but also pointedly noted that while he and the Texas party admire Schumer and want to help make him Senate majority leader, the New York senator and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee “don’t get to select who our nominee is.”

“We get to make that choice. You get to make that choice. Texas Democrats get to make that choice,” Hollins said, noting that primary voters will select from the “most diverse slate of candidates in the history of this state running for the Senate.”

Pastor E.A. Deckard, whose church hosted the event, also spoke to the crowd of several hundred people, offering a prayer to “cover this state in the color of blue.”

“The color blue should be true,” Deckard said.

O’Rourke sends message

O’Rourke, who was the party’s Senate nominee in 2018 and came within 3 percentage points of defeating Republican Sen. Ted Cruz, also addressed the crowd via video. He told them he is confident that whoever prevails among the Democrats is in a position to defeat Republican incumbent Sen. John Cornyn, who first must get past his own primary against four little-known rivals.

While the forum was going on, O’Rourke was about an hour away in Fort Bend County, block-walking on behalf of Texas House candidate Eliz Markowitz. The El Paso native was kicking off his new role, bringing hundreds of political veterans from his U.S. Senate and presidential campaign to help Markowitz.

O’Rourke also will be a presence through many of the remaining days leading up to the special election to fill the seat left vacant when state Rep. John Zerwas, R-Richmond, stepped down.

The first part of the program focused on the Senate primary candidates was devoted to an odd assortment of questions with very obvious answers, including “Do you consider yourself a Texan?” and “Which city has the best tacos?”

“Houston,” said Bell, answering the tacos query. “But I reserve the right to change my answer in a different city.” Only Adrian Ocegueda, who marches to his own drummer, said that, in the context of the current race, he would say he was an American and not a Texan.

Kim Ogg, Harris County district attorney, and Khambrel Marshall, a local meteorologist and broadcast journalist, who moderated the forum, both said they were only reading those questions, which were written by others.

1/12 Inside Texas Politics: Why Mike Bloomberg is skipping Iowa and focusing on Texas for presidential campaign [WFAA]

Presidential candidate Mike Bloomberg brought his presidential campaign to Dallas last week and spoke with host Jason Whitely while he was there.

Ross Ramsey, Bud Kennedy, and Berna Dean Steptoe, WFAA's political producer, joined host Jason Whitely to

discuss the tough week for two Democrats running for U.S. Senate. M.J. Hegar and Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez spent last week on the defensive. Hegar had to defend her vote in the 2016 Republican primary. And Tzintzún Ramirez apologized for saying that her surname, Tzintzún, is more Mexican than others.

Ross, Bud, and Berna Dean offered perspective on whether Hegar and Tzintzún Ramirez were hurt by their controversies. There was also a discussion on why Democratic presidential candidates Mike Bloomberg, Pete Buttigieg and Joe Biden were all spending time in Dallas.

1/13 Here's Lubbock County's 2020 Primary Ballot [Lubbock Online]

1/13 The Texas Democratic Senate race against John Cornyn is starting to show spark By Gromer Jeffers Jr. [Dallas Morning News]

Candidates are scrambling to reach voters for the March primary.

If you had a “wake me up when it starts” attitude about the Democratic race for Senate, the alarm clock may be about to ring.

The candidates are beginning to show some spark as time is ticking toward the March 3 primary, where the 12-person contest is expected to be tossed into a runoff.

Much of the action has involved labor activist Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez, who was criticized after a profile I wrote about her contained part of her stump speech that sought to explain her less-than-common surname.

Last week she apologized for this quip from the speech: “Tzintzún is more Mexican than any Garcia or Lopez. We were the only indigenous group in Mexico that were not defeated by the Aztecs. So you know I come from good lineage and I’m ready to defeat John Cornyn.”

Days later, former Air Force helicopter pilot MJ Hegar dropped a news release blasting incumbent Republican Sen. John Cornyn, while knocking Tzintzún Ramirez for a fundraising appeal based on Iran’s strike against American troops in Iraq after President Donald Trump’s strike that killed Iranian military leader Gen. Qasem Soleimani.

Tzintzún Ramirez didn’t respond to Hegar, and her aides said she was focused on promoting her criminal justice plan.

But a political action committee that’s supporting her issued a defense of the fundraising appeal on Twitter.

The rest of the major candidates haven’t joined the fray and are campaigning outside of the spotlight.

What’s on tap is a fascinating tactical battle to finish first or second on March 3, and several candidates have a path to success in what the few polls conducted show is a close contest.

For the most part, you can put each major candidate in a bracket. If the candidates maximize their potential in their bracket, it could get them to the next round.

Hegar, 43, is running the broader campaign and has raised over \$2 million, much more than any of her rivals.

Because she has the money to communicate with voters, Hegar has the best chance of winning support from outside of her political stronghold. But she needs to improve her connection with minority voters.

The swipe against Tzintzún Ramirez could have been designed to show that she’ll battle Cornyn but is not from

the liberal wing of the party. Supporters of Tzintzún Ramirez said Hegar is afraid of the Latina activist.

For her part, Tzintzún Ramirez, 37, must achieve her goal of winning over and driving young voters and minority voters to the polls. She wants to get half of younger voters and 60% of Hispanic voters, a tall order with activist Sema Hernandez of Pasadena and the largely unknown Annie Garcia of Houston also in the contest. Hernandez finished second to former Rep. Beto O'Rourke of El Paso in the 2018 Senate primary.

In her favor, Tzintzún Ramirez is running a professional campaign and has the organizing experience to communicate with her base voters.

Meanwhile, state Sen. Royce West, 67, is trying to win big on his home turf of North Texas. West can benefit from the numerous contested races in North Texas, where voters know his name. So large turnout in the Dallas-area, where Democrats are trying to make congressional and state House gains, could propel him to success. The Dallas lawyer also is trying to mobilize black voters across the state and has the support of most Democrats in the Texas Legislature.

But West has not put together the campaign team needed for a statewide race, including managers and finance experts. Without that kind of structure, he might leave votes on the table.

Former Houston City Council member Amanda Edwards, 37, has represented 2.3 million people in Houston and could roll up numbers in Harris County. She's also a strong contender for minority votes and like West, her moderate position on issues gives her crossover appeal.

Edwards' challenge is to reach enough voters to make a difference. We'll soon see if she has the campaign cash to make it all work. She did raise over \$550,000 in the third quarter.

Former Rep. Chris Bell of Houston, 60, is also in the Harris County bracket, but he hopes his experience on the political scene will help his case with voters. The 2006 Democratic nominee for governor is the only candidate who has won a statewide primary.

He's cast himself as a pragmatic progressive and hopes to tally votes from across the state.

But Bell has to fight perceptions that he's had his chance and a fresh face would be a better matchup against Cornyn.

What all the candidates need is for voters to start paying attention. So wake up, everybody. The Senate race is worth watching.

1/10 Democratic Candidates for US Senate Make Their Case in Lubbock [Lubbock Avalanche Online]

1/11 Crowded Senate field takes aim at Abbott at Greenspoint event by Dylan McGuinness [Houston Chronicle]

Gov. Greg Abbott's decision to turn away refugees became a target of criticism among Democrats running for Senate at a Greenspoint area event Saturday, where several hopefuls fielded questions about the economy, gun control in America and criminal justice.

"I'm telling you this, the reality is if we get out and do what we're supposed to do in November, Greg Abbott will get the message," said longtime state Sen. Royce West. Abbott, the only governor thus far to opt out of the federal program, said Friday that Texas is overburdened with immigrants crossing the southern border.

For much of the rest of the two-hour event town hall, candidates concentrated their ire on Sen. John Cornyn,

who the winner of the primary will almost certainly face in the general election.

When asked in a lighter portion of the event for a book recommendation, former Houston City Councilwoman Amanda Edwards offered David and Goliath, by Malcolm Gladwell.

“I of course would be David, and John Cornyn is Goliath,” said Edwards, who trained her eye on Cornyn throughout the event.

Ten of the 12 candidates vying for the Democratic nomination attended the town hall at Green House International Church, which one organizer hailed as the best attendance so far in the campaign. It was hosted by the Harris County Democratic Party and a bevy of other local groups.

The event began with a message from the man whose relative success the field is seeking to emulate: former candidate Beto O’Rourke. He taped a message thanking participants.

“This race is winnable,” he said. Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee was also there to rally the crowd, leading them in chants of “We will win.”

Combat veteran and former congressional candidate MJ Hegar, considered a front-runner in the race, was a notable absence on stage. Hegar has led in the few polls of the field and recently won the endorsement of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

Before the start of the event, a Texas Democratic Party official emphasized to the crowd that they get to choose their nominee, not party leaders in Washington, D.C.

Chris Bell, a former congressman and Houston city councilman, tied his campaign to efforts to combat gun control and climate change. He came out in favor of a nationwide red flag law — in which law enforcement can ask judges for emergency orders to remove guns from someone they deem a risk to themselves or others — along with universal background checks and an assault weapons ban.

“I don’t have a problem with the Second Amendment,” said Bell. “I have a problem with the people who continue to mischaracterize it, and suggest that we can’t make certain guns illegal. We’ve made certain guns illegal in the United States for centuries now - machine guns, sawed-off shotguns.”

He found little disagreement on stage. Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez, a workers’ rights advocate, bragged that she is “the best shot” in her family, but she too voiced support for universal background checks and an assault weapons ban.

“I also graduated high school during the year of the Columbine shooting,” said Ramirez. “And I’ve been waiting my entire adult life to see Congress act and do very basic things... Instead, we decided to teach a generation of children to play dead in their classrooms.”

Annie Garcia, a business owner and nonprofit owner, also proposed holding credit companies responsible when they finance gun purchases used in mass shootings. She said they already refuse to finance Bitcoin purchases and should do the same with guns

West, who continually emphasized his decades of legislative experience, said he’s been working on the issue since Ann Richards was governor. He didn’t offer concrete policy endorsements in that domain but said mental health must be a consideration as well.

Edwards used the issue to criticize Cornyn’s leadership.

“That question I think we must answer with a switch in leadership,” she said. “John Cornyn has talked about it being complex. Well I have news, if you are not ready for complex issues, then you are not fit to be the U.S. Senator.”

Edwards branded herself as a “pro-growth” progressive, emphasizing the need for upward mobility and opportunity. She pitched workforce training programs and the need to expand broadband access to the parts of Texas that don’t have it.

“We have to make sure that we are creating and preserving good job opportunities for Americans, but not just thinking about it in the guise of trade policy,” she said. “What we need is a systematic, comprehensive approach to how we provide people with upward mobility opportunities within the industries they already exist in today.”

Ramirez stressed her experience in organizing. She helped create the Workers Defense Project, advocating for workers and immigrants, and launched Jolt, a group dedicated to registering and mobilizing Latinos in Texas. She said her top priorities were universal health care and an accessible economy.

She also broached overhauling the criminal justice system, referring to a proposal from Rep. Ayanna Pressley, D-Mass., that she recently endorsed. The plan gives incentives for state and local governments to decrease prison populations and calls for the elimination of cash bail.

“How did we get here? We got here by building a system that was more concerned with retribution than justice,” Ramirez said. “We got here by building a system that disproportionately targeted the poor and people of color.”

The primary will be held March 3.

MJ Hegar Tweets/Retweets

1/11/2020 H-E-B was ranked top grocery store in the country! But it’s from Texas, so we always knew it should be #1. My kiddos always pick H-E-B brand string cheese over any other snacks. [LINK](#)

Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez Tweets/Retweets

1/12/2020 ICYMI, I spoke on the San Antonio @ExpressNews podcast, Puro Politics, this week with @gilgamesh470. We talked about how we will #FlipTexas and about my stances on the issues. Have a listen below! [LINK](#)

1/12/2020 About to go live on instagram for a short Q&A! Join us here: [LINK](#)

1/12/2020 Tan orgullosa de ver los pasos que da @JoltInitiative y jóvenes Latinas con la campaña #poderquince
QUOTE Antonio Arellano @AntonioArellano Jamás ha pasado algo así en este estado o en esta nación. A través de nuestra campaña de poder quince estamos usando la cultura Latina para trascender límites políticos.
[LINK](#)

1/11/2020 We need to raise the minimum wage and tie it to inflation. And we need to make sure we leave no tipped workers behind. [LINK](#)

Amanda Edwards Tweets/Retweets

1/13/2020 Check out this segment of my @cheddar interview here! Student debt and economic opportunity are key issues we must address! #amandafortexas [VIDEO](#)

1/13/2020 It was great spending time talking to Democratic women in Tarrant County about winning in 2020! #amandafortexas

1/12/2020 Many thanks to all of the North Harris County Democratic Clubs that made the Senate Forum such a success! #democraticclubofthewoodlands #springdemocraticclub #cyfairareademocrats #springdemocrats #humbleareademocrats #cypresstomballdemocrats #kingwoodareademocrats

1/12/2020 We have to make sure that we are creating & preserving good job opportunities for Americans . . . What we need is a systematic comprehensive approach to how we provide people w/ upward mobility opportunities w/in the industries they already exist in today. LINK

1/12/2020 Vince Pryor @VincentPryor With our next US Senator @AmandaForTexas at the HCPD Senate Forum! PHOTO

Royce West Tweets/Retweets

1/11/2020 Huge crowd at the Harris County Democratic Party Senate Candidate Forum. PHOTO

1/10/2020 Texans are the toughest people out there, and I know we'll be prepared for whatever comes our way. Please be alert and stay safe this weekend. LINK

1/10/2020 Texans deserve a senator who will act as an impartial jurist in the upcoming impeachment trial. My statement: LINK

Cornyn Clips

1/10 **Texas Reps. Split Along Party Lines In House War Powers Resolution** [Texas Standard]

[...]

The sentiment from Texas Democrats, on the other hand, was that Trump acted recklessly when he approved the killing of Iranian Revolutionary Guard Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, Wermund says.

But some Republicans outside of Texas supported the resolution. Now the resolution moves to the Senate where Wermund doesn't expect Texas' Senators – both Republicans – John Cornyn and Ted Cruz to support it, though Cornyn has said the situation is a serious matter.

1/10 **Several Republican Party events to come in January** [Victoria Advocate]

Numerous Republican Party events are scheduled around Victoria later this month.

The Victoria County Republican Women's meeting is Jan. 14 at the Victoria County Club ballroom. State Rep. Geanie Morrison will be the guest speaker and will lead discussion about redistricting. Men are welcome to join.

Dwayne Stovall, a Republican candidate for U.S. Senate, is holding a meet and greet event Jan. 17 at Sky Restaurant. Stovall is in the race against incumbent John Cornyn, Mark Yancey, Virgil Bierschwale and John Castro.

There is a Republican Party meeting at the party headquarters, 115 S. Main St., Jan. 20. The guest speaker will be Pardis Mohebtash, who has lived in Iran and will speak on the current political situation in that country, said Barbara Breazeale. All are invited to attend.

Later this month, Texans for Lawsuit Reform will honor Morrison, the recipient of the Texans for Lawsuit Reform Civil Justice Leadership Award at an event Jan. 24 at the Victoria Country Club.

1/10 Matt Mackowiak: Attorney General Paxton fighting job-killing corporate monopolies by MATT MACKOWIAK [Waco Tribune Herald]

Time and again, permitting market concentration without the right safeguards in place have negatively impacted both industry's competitive landscape as well as the workers employed therein. At least so far, Attorney General Paxton has recognized this fact and has used every bit of authority and leverage he has to protect Texans. It's imperative that Texas' two U.S. senators John Cornyn and Ted Cruz, and the rest of our government officials, back him when these fights arise in Washington to ensure that competition and workers remain protected during any potential merger that could affect their constituents.

1/11 Democrats criticize McDaniel's GOP gift; Arkansan serves on national party's governing board by Frank E. Lockwood [Northwest Arkansas Democrat Gazette]

WASHINGTON -- Republican U.S. Sen. John Cornyn of Texas received a \$2,800 contribution in May from a leader in the opposition party -- Arkansas Democratic National Committeeman Dustin McDaniel.

It's a move that doesn't sit well with some Arkansas Democrats.

The former state attorney general, who serves on the national party's governing board, made the donation on May 15, 2019, Federal Election Commission records show.

The Little Rock attorney said he attended a fundraising lunch in Dallas and gave the money because it was held at a client's corporate office.

"It was the appropriate thing to do at the time, and there are no rules, that I know of, against it," he said Friday when reached by phone.

The donation doesn't mean he's rooting for Cornyn to return to Capitol Hill, McDaniel said.

"Of course I'd like to see a Democrat win that race and retake the United States Senate," he said. "My position on that is absolutely firm."

Press officials with the Democratic National Committee didn't respond Friday to questions about the donation. A staff member confirmed that a request for comment had been received, but couldn't say when a response would be forthcoming.

Democratic Party of Arkansas Chairman Michael John Gray said he hadn't heard about the Cornyn donation until contacted by a reporter.

"I've reached out to the DNC," he said. "I have not been informed that this would be any violation of DNC rules."

While McDaniel may be aiding Cornyn in Texas, he has also shown generosity to Arkansas Democrats over the years, Gray said.

The largest McDaniel contribution listed on the FEC website for 2019, \$4,000, went to Big Sky Values PAC, a political action committee affiliated with Montana Gov. Steve Bullock, a Democrat. Another \$2,800 went to Bullock's 2020 presidential campaign, which he ended last month. The Western politician, like McDaniel, is a former state attorney general.

Texas Democratic Party communications director Abhi Rahman said McDaniel's donation won't change the outcome.

"John Cornyn can raise all the money he wants but, at the end of the day, it doesn't change the fact that Texans don't like him, they don't trust him, and the fact that he's in for the fight of his life in 2020," he said.

McDaniel previously faced criticism for helping his Republican successor, Attorney General Leslie Rutledge, pay off her 2014 campaign debt. The \$2,000 donation from the term-limited McDaniel came in November of that year, after her election but before she took office.

Disclosed April 15, 2015, on Rutledge's final campaign contribution and expenditure report, it bothered some party activists.

"The concern was that people who were working for Democrats and held themselves out to be Democrats were actually working against Democrats by donating to Republicans," said Chris Burks, who was party general counsel when a related rules change occurred.

Later in 2015, the party's state committee voted to add a new section to the rules, empowering the party to discipline leaders who aid Republican campaigns, Burks said.

Titled "Officer Loyalty," it was ratified by the Democratic Party of Arkansas state convention the following year, he added.

"Public expressions of support, including campaign contributions, for candidates opposing nominees of the Democratic Party of Arkansas shall be the basis for censure or removal from office of any officer," Section 7.08 states.

It passed unanimously.

"There was no objection to it," Burks recalled. "It was a very clear prohibition. People felt very [strongly] about it."

The section didn't address aid to out-of-state Republicans.

McDaniel's financial support for Cornyn, a former Republican whip and one of Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's top lieutenants, violates the spirit of the rule, if not the letter, Burks said.

"An officer of the Democratic Party of Arkansas should not be donating to a Trump-supporting Republican. Period. Full stop," Burks said.

Asked in a subsequent text whether he has contributed to Republicans beyond Cornyn and Rutledge, McDaniel wrote: "I have given generously to Democrats at every level of government, all over the United States. I also have many friends who are Republicans, especially among America's Attorneys General, and have been proud to contribute across the aisle to good men and women who offer themselves up for public service."

McDaniel, a DNC member since 2014, isn't running for re-election to the committee. A successor will be chosen later this year.

Susan Inman, the Democratic nominee for secretary of state in 2014 and 2018, said she was surprised that McDaniel would help fund the opposition.

"It just feels bad, it looks bad, for Democrats in our state when our national committee member is contributing and funding candidates of another party," she said.

1/12 Cornyn Supports Trump Administration's Moves in Iran by Nikki Courtney [KPRC]

Texas Senator John Cornyn says he believes President Trump did the right thing by taking out an Iranian terrorist leader last week with an air strike.

Cornyn says the death of General Qasem Soleimani makes the world a better place.

The GOP Senator adds that the strike will deter further attacks on Americans and their allies.

Cornyn says so far it looks like Iran has decided not to escalate their limited response to the air strike, which amounted to ineffective missile attacks on U.S. bases in Iraq.

1/13 Trump impeachment trial fight for Bolton testimony echoes Monica Lewinsky [KFGO]

A senior Republican, Senator John Cornyn, however, warned in December of the "unintended consequences" of having witnesses.

"Witnesses say the darndest things," he said.

1/13 John Roberts may be leading the Senate impeachment trial, but this woman is shaping it By DARREN SAMUELSON [Politico]

But it's ultimately the Senate majority leader who makes the call on who serves in the post: Harry Reid promoted MacDonough in 2012 after Frumin's retirement, and Mitch McConnell kept the Washington, D.C., native around when Republicans took control of the chamber two years later following the 2014 midterms.

"I've been here with many, many parliamentarians. All were good. But she's the best," said Vermont Democratic Sen. Patrick Leahy, the longest active serving senator.

"She's tough," added Texas GOP Sen. John Cornyn, the former majority whip. "She calls them straight down the middle."

For the Trump trial, MacDonough's three-person office will get the added responsibility of serving as the main liaison for Roberts, who along with a select group of aides must make the short commute into a building that they typically only visit on ceremonial occasions.

1/13 NASA Honors First Astronauts to Graduate Under the Artemis Program at the Johnson Space Center by Nick Powell [Houston Chronicle]

The new graduates may be assigned to missions destined for the International Space Station, the moon and possibly Mars.

"The title of astronaut has always carried a sense of sweeping excellence," NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine said in his opening remarks at the ceremony. "This excellence is earned every day through a rare combination of meticulous effort. Our graduates today have demonstrated uncommon focus, uncommon commitment and dedication during the last two years of very intense training."

Friday's ceremony was the first public graduation ceremony for astronauts the agency has ever hosted. Sens. John Cornyn and Ted Cruz of Texas were in attendance, as well as several local politicians.

Cornyn Tweets/Retweets

1/13/2020 First responders risk their lives every single day to protect Texans. Our hearts are with the families of Lt. Eric Hill and Officer Nicholas Reyna, may they Rest In Peace – Texas is forever grateful for their service. LINK

1/13/2020 CBP @CBP January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Follow @DHSBlueCampaign to learn what DHS is doing to combat human trafficking, and learn about CBP's efforts to keep goods made with forced labor from entering the US: LINK

1/13/2020 Wind energy generated 20 percent of the electricity used in Texas last year @HoustonChron

1/13/2020 Not sure how to take this: "THIS WEEK WE'LL SEE KINETIC ACTION on impeachment for the first time in a while.: @playbookplus

1/13/2020 "A socialist is somebody who doesn't have anything, and is ready to divide it up equally among everybody." -- George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) Irish comic dramatist

1/13/2020 Iran's incursions have gone unanswered for decades. Trump's decision to kill Soleimani is good news for the Western Hemisphere, writes @MaryAnastasiaOG LINK via @WSJ

1/12/2020 i24NEWS English @i24NEWS_EN #IranProtests2020: Iranian students protesting Sunday, calling on Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei to step down after #Tehran admitted to accidentally downing Ukrainian plane with 176 people, many of them students. i24NEWS Adi @koplewitz reports: LINK

1/12/2020 Ted William Kemp @TedKempCNBC 17-year-old discovers planet on third day of internship with NASA @CNBC

1/12/2020 Matt Mackowiak @MattMackowiak DFW friends: This military funeral needs your support and attendance tomorrow. @MarkDavis @rodneyanderson @tarrantgop @tedcruz @JohnCorny QUOTE John "TIG" Tiegen @JohnTiegen ATTENTION: Any fellow Marines near #Dallas #fortworth or can travel to Fort Worth Texas Monday January 13th.

1/12/2020 Sarah Rumpf @rumpfshaker What about those of us who made the decision to attend an in-state school & worked through high school, college, and graduate school, and so we had no student loan debt? Why should my tax dollars subsidize someone who decided to rack up six figures of student loans?! QUOTE Brit Hume @brithume Would he also return the money to those who paid off their loans? Or would they just lose out for having done the right thing by paying back the money they borrowed? LINK

1/12/2020 Rep. Will Hurd @HurdOnTheHill This entire thread is a great analysis of what's really happening on the ground in Iran from someone who cares and has family there. I wish we were seeing more of this from Western media. QUOTE Yashar Ali @yashar 1. This AM I woke up to dozens of messages from family/friends in Iran Right now, Iran is a tinderbox internally. As some of you know, there are protests mostly around the anger that Iranians feel towards the gov after they admitted IRGC shot down the Ukraine Airlines aircraft

1/12/2020 CBP @CBP CBP and @USCG discovered these 387 rounds of ammo being illegally exported through Delaware to Honduras concealed inside a bucket of paint. Partnerships like this help keep weapons and ammo out of the hands of criminal organizations. Via @CBPMidAtlantic: LINK PHOTO

1/12/2020 Americans who lost limbs or loved ones in the Iraq war and fought to prove that General Suleimani played a role see justice in his death by a missile strike. LINK

1/12/2020 Secretary of Defense Dr. Mark T. Esper @EsperDoD The compelling action was to disrupt the attack by taking out Soleimani, a known terrorist leader. Taking him out disrupted the attack. It also reset deterrence with Iran and made it clear that we weren't going to tolerate this type of behavior. VIDEO

1/12/2020 Bloomberg is no Beto QUOTE Ken Paxton @KenPaxtonTX Beto didn't win Texas. LINK

1/12/2020 Speaker Pelosi: if you can't convict him, smear him. "This president is impeached for life, regardless of any gamesmanship on the part of Mitch McConnell. ... He will be impeached forever."

1/12/2020 Moreover, Clinton impeachment resolution agreed to by 100 Senators expressly provided for a vote on a motion to dismiss, which was made by Senator Robert C. Byrd, (D of WV), which failed. QUOTE Matt Whitlock @mattdizwhitlock "How dare they try to dismiss the thing I refuse to give them" is not particularly compelling. LINK

1/12/2020 Jonathan Turley @JonathanTurley Pelosi just said on ABC that that the House is in court pursuing the witnesses. They never issued a subpoena for Bolton, Giuliani and other. They pulled the subpoena on Kupperman. LINK

1/12/2020 Good: U.S., China agree to semi-annual talks aimed at reforms, resolving... LINK

1/12/2020 Doubt I am the only person that finds false claims of actually doing something to change the situation you are complaining about tiresome. #sowashington QUOTE Senator John Cornyn @JohnCornyn Pure propaganda. I just point out that this non-binding, symbolic resolution does nothing to achieve the goal you seek.

1/12/2020 Pure propaganda. I just point out that this non-binding, symbolic resolution does nothing to achieve the goal you seek. QUOTE Greg Sargent @ThePlumLineGS Republican Senator wants to give Trump absolute, unconstrained warmaking authority, at a time when Trump's rationales for the Soleimani assassination have collapsed and new information is surfacing indicating a much broader operation than previously known ---->

1/12/2020 It is not clear to me how the federal government can "erase" \$119 billion in private debt short of a court-ordered bankruptcy. Would Bernie also forgive student debt for millionaires and billionaires? QUOTE Brit Hume @brithume Would he also return the money to those who paid off their loans? Or would they just lose out for having done the right thing by paying back the money they borrowed? LINK

1/12/2020 Nothing-burger: "The mostly party-line vote on a symbolic, non-binding resolution... ." House votes to rein in Trump on Iran LINK

1/12/2020 Saeed Ghasseminejad @SGhasseminejad This tweet by @realDonaldTrump with more than 100k likes is already the most liked Persian tweet in the history of Twitter. A strong show of support by Iranians for Trump's Iran policy, something the MSM does not and will not report. QUOTE Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump به مردم شجاع و رنج کشیده ایران: من از ابتدای دوره ریاست جمهورییم با شما ایستاده‌ام و دولت من همچنان با شما خواهد ایستاد. ما اعتراضات شما را از نزدیک دنبال می‌کنیم. شجاعت شما الهام بخش

1/12/2020 In Blow to Beijing, Taiwan Re-elects Tsai Ing-wen as President LINK

1/11/2020 USBPChief @USBPChief USBP agents near Turner, Maine arrested 8 illegal aliens, including some w/ prior deportations and visa overstay. Agents also seized >1 lb of cocaine, and fraudulent social security cards and immigration documents. via @CBPNewEngland: LINK

1/11/2020 India in USA @IndianEmbassyUS Amb @HarshShringla, who is proceeding to New Delhi to take up his assignment as Foreign Secretary, called on President Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump @Potus @

Oval Office of @WhiteHouse & thanked him for his steadfast support for strengthening the India-US strategic partnership PHOTO

1/11/2020 Sounds positive QUOTE Kamala Harris @KamalaHarris We're facing a mental health crisis. Too many Americans lack access to the care they need, and millions live in an area with a shortage of mental health professionals. That's why I've introduced a bill that utilizes telemedicine to expand access to mental health services.

1/11/2020 City of Lubbock @cityoflubbock Today is a tragic day due to the loss of two heroes and a third who is critically injured. Please keep Lubbock Police Department and Lubbock Fire Rescue, as well as their families, in your thoughts. QUOTE Lubbock Police Dept. @LubbockPolice It is not possible to express the hurt we all feel from the death our own officer, and the death and injuries to our firefighter brothers, and the grief of their families and friends.

1/11/2020 Jake Tapper @jaketapper Translated from Persian: To the brave, long-suffering people of Iran: I've stood with you since the beginning of my Presidency, and my Administration will continue to stand with you. We are following your protests closely, and are inspired by your courage. QUOTE Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump به مردم شجاع و رنج کشیده ایران: من از ابتدای دوره ریاست جمهوری با شما ایستاده‌ام و دولت من همچنان با شما خواهد ایستاد. ما اعتراضات شما را از نزدیک دنبال می‌کنیم. شجاعت شما الهام بخش

1/11/2020 Jake Tapper @jaketapper It turns out plenty of Iranians loathed Soleimani, opposed the terrorism he spread, and don't like the regime lying to them about shooting down a passenger plane. And they're risking quite a bit by protesting publicly — QUOTE Babak Taghvaae @BabakTaghvaae #BREAKING: Special Pasdaran Unit of #Iran's Islamic Regime Police is now brutally attacking & suppressing #AmirKabir university students who are protesting against #Iran's Islamic Regime over shot-down of Flight #PS752 of #Ukraine International Airlines by #IRGC|ASF's Tor-M1. LINK

1/11/2020 CBSDFW @CBSDFW Yes, actual snow! Snow falls in parts of North Texas amid Winter Weather Advisory:

1/11/2020 Retired Orrin G. Hatch @RetiredOrrin "How the House destroyed its own case for the Trump impeachment." There are a number of critical points @jonathanturley makes here on House Democrat's strategic ineptitude and inconsistency that are worthy of your consideration.

1/11/2020 Brit Hume @brithume It does nothing of the kind. It's a nonbinding resolution that has no chance of a surviving a veto even if it passed the Senate. QUOTE Andrew Desiderio @AndrewDesiderio BREAKING: House passes Iran War Powers resolution limiting Trump's power to go to war with Iran without congressional authorization, one week after a U.S. strike killed Qassem Soleimani.

1/11/2020 F.B.I. Apologizes to Court for Botching Surveillance of Trump Adviser, and Pledges Fixes LINK

1/11/2020 Pelosi caves LINK

1/11/2020 "Never put a time limit on your doomsday predictions": The telling tale of Glacier National Park's 'gone by 2020' signs LINK via @nypost

1/11/2020 3 charts showing good news about American wage growth LINK via @AEI LINK

1/11/2020 "Americans intended to introduce freedom to China, but instead traded it for Chinese money": Future of America's Contest with China LINK

1/11/2020 Indian-American among NASA's new astronauts; all set to conquer Moon, Mars [LINK](#)

1/10/2020 Alec MacGillis @AlecMacGillis This is nuts: a couple making \$5 million now saves almost \$400,000 in annual taxes by moving from NY to Florida.

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Anna Lee Hirschi
617.519.9731

From: Anna Lee Hirschi [annalee@mjfortexas.com]
Sent: 12/30/2019 8:40:25 AM
To: Anna Lee Hirschi [annalee@mjfortexas.com]
Subject: MJ Hegar Clips 12/30

Press Clips

12/27 Excitement builds as Fort Bend County March primary battleground races take shape by Kristi Nix [Houston Chronicle/Houston Community Newspapers]

U.S. Senator John Cornyn faces four opponents in the Republican primary: Virgil Bierschwale, John Anthony Castro, Dwayne Stovall and Mark Yancey. The Democratic candidates include former U.S. Rep. Chris Bell of Houston, Houston council member Amanda Edwards, former Air Force helicopter pilot MJ Hegar of Round Rock, state Sen. Royce West of Dallas, activist Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez of Austin, Adrian Ocegueda, Annie “Mama” Garcia, Michael Cooper, D.R. Hunter, Jack Daniel Foster Jr., Victor Hugo Harris and Sema Hernandez. The favored Democratic candidate is MJ Hegar who recently secured an endorsement from the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

MJ Hegar Tweets/Retweets

12/29/2019 John Lewis @repjohnlewis Do not get lost in a sea of despair. Be hopeful, be optimistic. Our struggle is not the struggle of a day, a week, a month, or a year, it is the struggle of a lifetime. Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble. #goodtrouble

12/29/2019 Horrified by this news of people being shot and killed while worshipping this morning in White Settlement, Texas. My heart is with the victims, families, and first responders. Churches, synagogues, schools, movie theaters, festivals... we have to stand up & put a stop to this. QUOTE Dallas Morning News @dallasnews #Breaking: 2 dead, 1 in critical condition after reported shooting at church in White Settlement

12/28/2019 This plan could hurt 390,000 Texans & was clearly made by someone who never experienced food insecurity. If your car is worth \$4,650+, you're considered too rich for SNAP. Think about what it would mean to choose between transportation or food while trying to get on your feet. QUOTE Texas Tribune @TexasTribune The Trump administration approved the first in a series of proposed changes to restrict access to the federal food safety net earlier this month, but the rule that could kick as many as 390,000 Texans off SNAP is still under review.

12/27/2019 I'm proud to have worn the uniform with the men who showed tremendous courage in reporting these crimes in the face of enormous pressure. Gallagher's pardon is not only morally repugnant, but undermines good order and discipline and contributes to a dangerous culture of silence. QUOTE The New York Times @nytimes Video recordings obtained by The New York Times, which have not been shown publicly before, show confidential interviews with the Navy SEALs who accused Special Operations Chief Edward Gallagher of war crimes

12/25/2019 Merry Christmas to all who are celebrating! I hope your day is filled with peace, joy, good food, and the ones you love.

12/24/2019 Jude and Daniel have been looking forward to Christmas Eve all year long! PHOTO

Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez Tweets/Retweets

12/29/2019 We change Texas with the power of grassroots movements like these- chip in now #movimiento2020 QUOTE Antonio Arellano @AntonioArellano We are only 9 seats away from flipping the

TX House. Chip in now to help @JoltAction knock on 100,000 Latino voter doors by Nov. 2020: <http://jolttx.org/donate> #Tx2020 #Movimiento2020

12/29/2019 We haven't yet achieved true democracy for all, but Rep. Lewis has helped bring us so much closer. Praying for a quick and full recovery. Like he's said, we still have so many bridges to cross. QUOTE Saba Hamedy @saba_h Statement from Rep. John Lewis' office re: undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer. "I have been in some kind of fight – for freedom, equality, basic human rights – for nearly my entire life. I have never faced a fight quite like the one I have now."

12/29/2019 Thanks so much for your support, Alec! Here's that link to donate– we appreciate every single contribution, no matter the amount: LINK QUOTE HABFoundation @ABFalecbaldwin Here is the future of Texas! Please donate to the US Senate campaign of my friend, Cristina Tzintzun. @cristinafortx

12/29/2019 Another shooting in another house of worship. My heart goes out to all my fellow Texans impacted by this tragedy today. When we #FlipTheSenate, we will take meaningful legislative action to end gun violence. We owe that to everyone impacted by this epidemic– and to our kids. QUOTE MSNBC @MSNBC BREAKING: 2 people are dead and another person is in critical condition after a reported shooting at a church in White Settlement, Texas, @NBCDFW reports. LINK

12/29/2019 We must address the horrific rise in anti-semitic violence in the US. Sending love to Monsey. Together, we'll work towards a world where no one fears for their life because of who they pray to, where they come from, what they look like, or who they love. LINK

12/28/2019 "They learned in 2018...that if you come for Latino families–we will come for you and vote you out of office." Together, we're showing Cornyn and Trump that separating families and stoking hate have consequences. Interview with @LuzCollective here: LINK

12/27/2019 "In TX, people like John Cornyn... have been holding on to power not by winning with a mandate, but... with a minority of voters coming out and voting." We'll win with a true mandate in 2020 by turning out Texas voters like never before. Full interview @InTheThickShow QUOTE IN THE THICK @InTheThickShow #NowPlaying a new @inthethickshow @maria_hinojosa & @julito77 welcome @cristinafortx to discuss her candidacy in a crowded Democratic field, the #GOP response to Democrats' rising popularity in #TX, & the major demographic shifts #YouthVote LISTEN: LINK

12/26/2019 IN THE THICK @InTheThickShow #NowPlaying a new @inthethickshow @maria_hinojosa & @julito77 welcome @cristinafortx to discuss her candidacy in a crowded Democratic field, the #GOP response to Democrats' rising popularity in #TX, & the major demographic shifts #YouthVote LISTEN: LINK

12/26/2019 Thanks for proving our point about why we need #MedicareForAll, @JohnCornyn. Texans know from experience that those increased payments to hospitals also mean increased costs for the patient. Those huge costs regularly bankrupt Texas families. QUOTE Senator John Cornyn @JohnCornyn In 2017, the prices paid to hospitals for privately insured patients averaged 241 percent of what Medicare would have paid. @RANDCorporation

12/26/2019 1/3 of eligible voters in Texas are Latinx. But until 2018, our state hadn't elected a Latina congresswoman. And we've still never had a Latina senator. Together, we're changing that in 2020.

12/26/2019 Let's build student debt relief programs that are designed to help people succeed rather than rejecting 99% of applicants. I will fight to cancel #studentdebt for millions of Americans that are struggling to pay back their loans. Investing in our people is the right thing to do. QUOTE Public Citizen @Public_Citizen The Education Department has rejected 53,339 of the 54,000 applications for its loan forgiveness program. Yes, you read that correctly.

12/25/2019 Merry Christmas to everyone celebrating today! Wishing you a meaningful holiday filled with joy.

12/24/2019 Santi recently came down with pneumonia, so we've been in and out of the hospital the past few days. Send my little man good healing energy and prayers. He's going to be okay. This was a reminder for me of why we need #MedicareforAll. Here's why. Even with my insurance, our 1st hospital visit had a \$500 copay. Texas has the highest uninsured rate in the U.S. Many are forced to wait until they're really sick to seek the care they need. I want all Texans to be able to see a doctor when they're sick and get good care. 2/ No state would benefit more from true universal health care than Texas. We'll keep working to make it a reality in the new year. Wishing everyone a happy and healthy holidays- Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah to those celebrating. 3/3

12/24/2019 .@LUCHA_AZ is showing exactly how it's done— and we're learning with them how to turn our hardest moments into lasting political power for the Latino community. We'll win in 2020 by believing in the power of us. #LaLuchaSigue.

Amanda Edwards Tweets/Retweets

12/29/2019 I extend my condolences to the families, friends and community members of those killed at the church in near Fort Worth this morning. We need to do what we can to PREVENT senseless killings like these. We must pass sensible gun policies now. QUOTE NBC News @NBCNews BREAKING: 2 people are dead and another person is in critical condition after a reported shooting at a church in White Settlement, Texas, @NBCDFW reports. LINK

12/29/2019 It's after Christmas, the sales are in full swing, and the time is now to contribute to our campaign! With just a few days left before the end of year deadline, we need your help. Please contribute today! <http://amandafortexas.com> #AmandaForTexas

12/28/2019 My #SeniorsforAmanda don't play games! They are out here fired up and ready for the election because they know that I am ready and able to be a voice for them! #DontMessWithMySeniors #SeniorsforAmanda #WeReady #AmandaforTexas

12/27/2019 Many thanks to some of the key union leaders I got a chance to talk to about issues that impact working families! I appreciate the opportunity to engage and elevate the concerns raised during these meetings!

12/26/2019 Calling all volunteers! We are about 2 months away from our March 3rd Primary! Whether it's making calls, knocking or helping on social media, we need your help! Sign up at <https://amandafortexas.com> to join Team Amanda today! #AmandaForTexas

12/25/2019 Merry Christmas! I can't tell if I was impressed or not by this present in this #throwback picture. Regardless of the gifts exchanged, may you find peace and joy as you celebrate with your family and friends! #Christmas #Christmas2019 PHOTO

Royce West Clips

Royce West Tweets/Retweets

12/25/2019 Merry Christmas! May your day be filled with peace and the promise of the new year ahead.

Other Clips

12/27 **After Premature End to Congressional Career Chris Bell Seeks Redemption in Senate Bid [Dallas Morning News]**

Article not found

Cornyn Clips

12/23 Cornyn: As soon as the Senate finishes the impeachment process, we can get back to growing our list of legislative wins by John Cornyn [Dallas Morning News]

With the first partisan impeachment vote since the Civil War complete, the spotlight will now shift to the U.S. Senate. Taking part in an impeachment trial is a solemn responsibility, and one I take extraordinarily seriously. But beneath the never-ending stream of headlines about impeachment, it's been easy to miss the stories about everything else happening in Washington. This was a busy year, and together, we've notched a lot of wins for Texas.

Last week, Congress passed two major pieces of legislation to strengthen America's military. The defense funding bill will provide a nearly \$20 billion increase over last year's funding levels, 98 new F-35 aircraft, which will be built by Texans in Fort Worth, and the largest pay raise in a decade for our troops.

This bill complements the National Defense Authorization Act, which invests in military modernization, and fully funds the B-21 bomber program for future deployment out of Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene. It also approved funds for military construction projects at Corpus Christi Army Depot, Fort Hood, Camp Swift, and Joint Base San Antonio, totaling \$400 million.

Beyond the investment in our troops, this legislation also includes a number of bills I introduced to improve the quality of life for our servicemembers and veterans.

I've heard from active duty soldiers who thought the absentee voting process was too complicated, so they weren't able to vote. This defense spending bill included a provision I introduced to simplify the process so we can remove the barriers preventing men and women in uniform from casting a ballot.

I've also talked with Texas veterans who have fallen on hard times, and had to fight for their VA and Department of Defense disability benefits in bankruptcy proceedings, because unlike Social Security disability benefits, they aren't exempted. This legislation righted that wrong too. No veteran should be penalized for receiving the disability compensation they are rightly due.

On top of the gains for our military, I've been proud to help corral a long list of wins for Texas.

It's been more than two years since Hurricane Harvey, and folks continue to rebuild and prepare for future disasters. Sadly, some of the federal funding has gotten tangled in the Washington bureaucracy. In February 2018, Congress approved more than \$4 billion for disaster mitigation in Texas, but after more than a year, folks at home still hadn't seen a dime. This summer, Congress passed a provision I introduced requiring the Office of Management and Budget to send those, and any future funds approved by Congress, within 90 days. Earlier this year, we also approved \$4.6 billion to support communities nationwide recovering from natural disasters, including those in Texas.

Another challenge we've faced over this past year is the humanitarian crisis at the border, which hit its peak in May. Communities throughout the state were quick to lend a hand, and help do a job that should be the responsibility of the federal government. I helped secure \$30 million for local governments, states and charitable organizations to receive reimbursements for their work in response to this crisis, and nearly 40 percent of the initial funding went to Texas.

This week the House also passed the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA, which replaces NAFTA and modernizes trade with Mexico and Canada. Once the Senate completes the impeachment process, this will be the first item on our to-do list. I've been working with the Trump Administration to ensure this agreement benefits Texas, and I secured funding for the North American Development Bank, which will provide \$215 million to improve infrastructure in our border communities.

On top of all this, we've grown the number of well-qualified federal judges confirmed under President Donald Trump to 185, including 20 outstanding Texans. We've taken steps to secure American's voting systems ahead of the 2020 election. We strengthened our fight to end the rape kit backlog, passed a landmark bill to fund autism research, and made the most significant reforms to the IRS in two decades.

I'm proud of the work I've done in Washington this year on behalf of Texans, and as soon as the Senate has concluded its role in the impeachment process, I'm eager to keep our list of accomplishments growing.

John Cornyn is a Republican U.S. Senator representing Texas. He wrote this column for The Dallas Morning News.

12/23 2020 Senate and House outlook looks a lot like it did at the start of 2019 by Nathan L. Gonzales [Roll Call]

[...]

The overall shape of the fight for the Senate hasn't changed much in the past 12 months. In January, 10 races were considered competitive, compared with 11 competitive Senate races as the year comes to a close.

The partisanship of the competitive races shifted slightly in favor of Democrats. At the beginning of the cycle, Republicans were defending six competitive seats while Democrats were defending four. With less than a year before Election Day, Republicans are defending eight of the competitive states, compared with just three for Democrats.

Minnesota Democrat Tina Smith was the only senator on the first list of 2020's competitive races who was not listed as vulnerable by the end of the year. Former Rep. Jason Lewis, North Central University professor Rob Barrett and other Republicans are running, but it's clear the race is not a priority for Republicans at his stage, even though Minnesota is likely to be a presidential battleground.

Two races were added to the list of competitive seats over the year: Texas and Georgia.

With limited state polling showing President Donald Trump is less than a slam dunk in the Lone Star State and GOP Sen. Ted Cruz's 3-point victory in 2018, there's an increasing chance that Republicans will have to spend some time, energy and maybe even money defending GOP Sen. John Cornyn.

12/23 John Cornyn Announces Senate Passage Of Commemorative Coin For George H.W. & Barbara Bush by Bill Oliver [WTAW]

Another step has been taken towards issuing commemorative a \$1 dollar coin honoring George H.W. and Barbara Bush.

That's after the U.S. Senate passed a bill authored by John Cornyn.

Cornyn told WTAW News it took a two-thirds majority to pass Senate Bill 457, "but there was no question on a bi-partisan basis about getting this done for George Herbert Walker and Barbara Bush".

Cornyn also issued the following statement: "President George H.W. Bush and his wife Barbara were shining examples of what it looks like to put your country first," said Sen. Cornyn. "Memorializing their legacy with a coin will serve as a positive reminder of their love of service for generations to come."

Similar legislation introduced by Texas congressman Roger Williams has been in a House committee since last February.

The coin would be designed once the bill is signed into law.

12/25 Why dogs are becoming invaluable in the courtroom By Shawna De La Rosa [The Hill]

[...]

A bill called Dogs As Witness Guardians was introduced by Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) in April 2019 that would allow certified facility dogs to be present in criminal federal court proceedings, and for other purposes.

[...]

12/26 What are Texas Sens. Ted Cruz and John Cornyn's intentions as Trump's impeachment goes to trial? By Paul Cobler [Dallas Morning News]

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump is the third president in the history of the U.S. to be impeached, but he can count on Texas' two GOP senators to have his back as a trial approaches in the Senate.

Sens. Ted Cruz and John Cornyn have publicly defended Trump during the House's impeachment process on nearly every public medium available to them, with Cornyn recently calling the House's process "bogus" and Cruz saying there was "zero evidence" to warrant impeachment.

Critiquing the House

Both Texas senators have said the process wasn't thorough enough.

"I think this is the beginning of the end for this show trial," Cruz said during a Dec. 15 appearance on ABC's This Week.

He said the House should have investigated Trump's accusation that former Vice President Joe Biden improperly used his office to protect his son, Hunter Biden, while he was working on the board of a Ukraine oil and gas company. No evidence has been offered that the Bidens engaged in any corruption.

Cornyn dismissed a request from Democrats for additional witnesses during a Senate trial.

"It's up to the House to develop the evidence that they then want to present to the Senate, who then sits as a jury," he said on a phone call with reporters.

Impartial jurors

Both senators are charged with acting as impartial jurors in a Senate trial to either acquit Trump or convict and remove him from office, in accordance with the U.S. Constitution.

Cornyn has expressed doubt that senators can be impartial in their duties, citing a "conflict of interest" for Democratic senators who are running for president and have previously disparaged Trump.

As for a vote at the end of a Senate trial, Cornyn's mind appears to be made up.

"The question is, should he be removed from office?" Cornyn told reporters. "I don't see anything that has come to light yet that deserves that treatment, particularly less than a year before the election."

Cruz said on This Week that he "fully" intended to follow his oath but that "the oath of a Senate juror — it has some similarities to a criminal trial, but it has some differences as well."

Media blitz

Cruz's appearance was part of a television blitz in which he appeared on more than a dozen shows during the run-up to the House's impeachment vote and the Senate trial.

In early December, Cruz made waves when he appeared on NBC's Meet the Press and told host Chuck Todd that he believed Ukraine interfered in the 2016 presidential election. Current and former federal officials have said there is no evidence of Ukrainian interference, which Todd was quick to point out.

Still, the incident ignited a firestorm on social media, and Trump thanked Cruz on Twitter for his defense.

Cornyn has used Twitter to defend Trump and attack the House's impeachment process.

Since the impeachment inquiry was launched in September, Cornyn has tweeted or retweeted criticism of the process hundreds of times.

"No quid pro quo, no bribery, bogus obstruction charge," Cornyn wrote on Twitter in the days before the House's impeachment vote, sharing a Wall Street Journal editorial that bore the subhead "The Democratic grounds for ousting Trump are weak — and damaging to constitutional norms."

In particular, Cornyn contends that the impeachment process has delayed congressional action on legislation.

"Unfortunately, important legislation like this has fallen casualty to impeachment mania," Cornyn tweeted, referring to the Violence Against Women Act. "We will keep trying to pass a bipartisan bill but it takes two (parties) to tango."

Democrats in the House note that the House has passed hundreds of bills that the Senate hasn't allowed to reach the floor, including an expanded version of the Violence Against Women Act. Negotiations around the act have stalled in the Senate over concerns about closing a gun background check loophole.

12/26 Ocasio-Cortez hilariously owns GOP senator after he inadvertently makes the case for Medicare for All by Brad Reed [Raw Story]

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) on Thursday dunked on Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX) after he inadvertently made the case for Medicare for All.

In a tweet posted on Christmas Eve, Cornyn cited a Rand Corporation study showing that private insurers pay significantly more to hospitals than Medicare does.

"In 2017, the prices paid to hospitals for privately insured patients averaged 241 percent of what Medicare would have paid," he wrote.

The problem, of course, is that the United States already pays far more per capita for health care than any other country in the world, and a major reason for it is the country's reliance on multiple private insurers that do not have the broad negotiating power that more government-centric health care systems in countries such as Canada, the United Kingdom, and France enjoy.

This is a major justification given by Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) in his presidential campaign for expanding Medicare to cover the entire population: It would give the government vastly more leverage to hammer down what doctors and hospitals charge for treatments and procedures.

"Keep going!" Ocasio-Cortez wrote in response to Cornyn's tweet. "You're so close to getting it!"

12/28 Impeachment trial will supercharge battle for Senate By JAMES ARKIN [Politico]

The battle for the Senate majority in 2020 was always going to be heated. And now here comes impeachment.

The Senate's impeachment trial of President Donald Trump is stuck in limbo, but the looming verdict will likely be the most consequential vote senators take before next year's elections — and a weighty position for challengers seeking to join the chamber.

Impeachment also threatens to yoke the 35 Senate races even closer to the presidential contest. The politics around impeachment have calcified for both parties, with public opinion rigidly consistent and senators and candidates mostly falling along party lines ahead of a prospective vote on whether to acquit Trump or remove him from office.

Democrats — who need to net three seats in next year's elections to win control of the chamber if they also win the presidency — have attempted to squeeze vulnerable GOP senators, calling for a fair trial to include administration witnesses who refused to testify before the House and criticizing Majority Leader Mitch McConnell for saying he does not consider himself an impartial juror.

But Republican senators have shown few signs of breaking with Trump — instead criticizing House Democrats' impeachment process as sloppy, partisan and incomplete — following a similar pattern after not a single Republican defected from Trump in the House.

“I think it's unrealistic to expect that somehow politics isn't a dominant factor in this,” said Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas), who is seeking reelection next year in a state that has been increasingly competitive in recent elections. He said senators would “rise above politics to do the right thing in a case where the facts were compelling. The problem is this is a partisan political process from the beginning. The facts aren't compelling. And I think we know what the outcome is going to be.”

Several other vulnerable GOP senators on the ballot next year echoed Cornyn. Sen. Thom Tillis of North Carolina has rebuked impeachment and said he agreed with McConnell's assertion that it is a political process. Sen. David Perdue of Georgia called it a “sham.” A spokesperson for Sen. Cory Gardner of Colorado said he viewed the House impeachment as a “total circus” but was confident the Senate process would be “bipartisan and fair.”

Sen. Joni Ernst of Iowa labeled it a “political process” and dismissed it as unlikely that she would be convinced during a Senate trial. “If what they're presenting to us is what they presented in the House, I think they're on kind of shaky ground,” Ernst said.

[...]

12/28 Fort Hood: Military family still dealing with struggles of displacement due to mold By Alex Gibbs [KWTX]

FORT HOOD, Texas (KWTX) A Central Texas military family is still coping with the hardships in being displaced multiple times due to growing mold within their homes.

Emilee Brown and her family have been displaced for over 400 days due to flooded HVAC systems and toxic mold growing within each home they've been displaced to.

Both Brown and her children have been sick multiple times and were getting rashes due to overexposure.

“My eight-year-old is so fearful of mold because we've been in three homes that have not been safe,” she said.

All of her family's belongings were contaminated by the growing mold. She claims that Fort Hood Family Housing, owned by the company Lendlease, guaranteed her reimbursement for all of the belongings.

Only two items have been reimbursed.

"We turned in our reimbursement inventory in November and we've not heard anything back," she said.

KWTX reached out to Lendlease and Fort Hood Family Housing for comment and received this statement.

"Fort Hood Family Housing is dedicated to creating and maintaining quality, safe, healthy and sustainable communities for our military personnel and their families.

Over the past several months, the continual improvement of the communities we provide to military personnel and their families has been a primary focus. With customer service as a top priority, we have made and continue to make improvements including, but not limited to, enhanced work order response, technology improvements, implementation of a customer care program and resident communication enhancements.

We are proud to partner with the military to serve the men and women of the armed services and we remain committed to continuing to work with our military partners to explore a range of customer-focused solutions to improve the quality of life for all families living in our communities."

Heading into 2020, Brown says change must be made.

"It's not enough," she said.

"Every single day, there are residents that're in harms way that need help."

On December 18th, U.S. Senators Ted Cruz and John Cornyn sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper to request a briefing on the current initiatives to improve military housing at Joint Base San Antonio and Fort Hood.

Esper has not officially responded to the letter yet.

12/29 What the events of 2019 mean for the 2020 Texas political landscape by John C Moritz [Corpus Christi Caller Times]

[...]

All eyes on Cornyn

U.S. Sen. John Cornyn isn't the sort who makes big-splash headlines. But one of the moves the long-serving Republican did make was to tie his fortunes to those of President Donald Trump.

If the president emerges from the impeachment storm as more a victim than a perp in the minds of Texas voters, Cornyn benefits. If Trump doesn't, Cornyn doesn't.

In 2020, Cornyn is trying to do what very few senators from Texas have ever done. And that's win a fourth six-year term. Of the 30 men and one woman who have represented Texas in the Senate, only five had been elected to more than three full terms. And none since 1988.

But Cornyn, who has only token GOP opposition while a crowded field has assembled on the Democratic side, has the wind at his back when it comes to historical precedent.

Since 1922, Texas voters have only rejected one senator who has sought re-election — not counting the couple of times someone who was appointed to fill a vacancy was turned out of office after only a couple of months.

12/28 GOOD NEWS: Official Visit [Odessa American Online]

U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) recently met with Permian Strategic Partnership Chairman Don Evans and Texas Transportation Commission Chairman Bruce Bugg to discuss energy production and transportation priorities for Texans in the Permian Basin. The Dec. 2 meeting in Washington follows Cornyn's visit to the Permian Basin Petroleum Museum in Midland in August with Evans and Bugg to discuss West Texas infrastructure with local elected officials.

12/29 U.S. companies are forcing workers to train their own foreign replacements by Stef W. Kight [Axios]

Opponents of job outsourcing are making a holiday-season appeal to President Trump: Stop U.S. companies from forcing American workers to train the very same cheaper foreign laborers who will soon replace them.

Why it matters: Trump promised voters he'd end abuses of worker visa programs and save U.S. jobs — but as he campaigns for re-election, advocates say he hasn't done enough.

Driving the news: AT&T is poised to send thousands into the new year hunting for new jobs after assigning them to train their own foreign replacements, according to conversations with current and former workers and documents obtained by Axios.

Many have worked for the company for over a decade. They aren't being offered severance or early retirement, and may not easily find a comparable job elsewhere with similar pay.

What they're saying: Sara Blackwell, a Florida-based lawyer who represents Americans displaced by workers on visas or overseas, told Axios: "American workers are tired of waiting for President Trump to do something on this issue."

"They've gone from great hope in President Trump's administration, to great discouragement."

She sent letters to Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas.), Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and Dallas Mayor Eric Johnson, as AT&T is headquartered in Dallas.

She also met this month to discuss the problem with White House officials. The White House did not respond to a request for comment.

12/29 Republicans praise gun laws they say thwarted church shooter; Democrats again call for gun control By Paul Cobler [Dallas Morning News]

WASHINGTON — Following another deadly shooting on Sunday, Texas Republicans praised members of a church security team who stopped a gunman, citing state laws allowing weapons in houses of worship. Meanwhile, Democrats repeated their call for more restrictive gun laws that they say would prevent shootings.

Politicians weighed in on the Sunday morning shooting at West Freeway Church of Christ in the Fort Worth suburb of White Settlement, where a gunman killed two churchgoers before being shot and killed in the sanctuary.

At a Sunday evening press conference in White Settlement, Republican Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick credited laws passed by the Texas legislature for allowing churchgoers to carry weapons and have a trained security team.

"The immediate responder is the most important; the citizen responder," Patrick said. "Because even though the chief's brave officers were here in less than a minute ... by the time they got here, the shooting was over. And that always happens, that over 50 percent of shootings, our first responders, it's usually over when they get there, no matter how hard they try."

Democrats said Texas could do more than allow worshippers to be armed.

"As elected officials, we must do more to protect Texans," state Sen. Beverly Powell, D-Burleson, said in a statement. "Months ago, I, along with many of my colleagues in the House and Senate, called for a special session to address the rise of gun violence in Texas. We can and must respect the Second Amendment, but the time has come to address serious solutions to save the lives of innocent Texans."

Republican Gov. Greg Abbott called the shooting an "evil act of violence" in a statement Sunday afternoon and made no mention of any possible legislative solution.

"Places of worship are meant to be sacred, and I am grateful for the church members who acted quickly to take down the shooter and help prevent further loss of life," Abbott said. "Cecilia [Abbott's wife] and I ask all Texans to join us in praying for the White Settlement community and for all those affected by this horrible tragedy."

Abbott faced pressure from Democrats to call a special session of the Texas Legislature following the August mass shootings at a Walmart in El Paso and on the highway between Odessa and Midland.

That pressure was renewed after this latest shooting.

"Thankful for those that stopped the shooter in #WhiteSettlement today," tweeted state Rep. Joe Moody, D-El Paso. "Sad that I even have to offer those thanks. Church shootings shouldn't be our new normal, and they don't have to be."

Following the mass shooting in El Paso, Abbott appointed commissions on safety and domestic terrorism but has declined to call a special session.

State Rep. Jeff Leach, R-Plano, alluded to the Texas Legislature's debate over gun control in his own tweet.

"We should never waver in offering sincere prayers for comfort and healing for victims and their families," he wrote. "And we should never waver in being laser focused on aggressively cracking down on law-breakers while vigorously protecting the rights of law-keepers."

Moody and Leach then engaged in a back-and-forth on Twitter, where Moody called for background checks on sales at gun shows, uniform protective order laws and a program that incentivizes gun owners to safely store their firearms.

Leach agreed that the state needs to "close any and all loopholes that empower bad guys" but offered no specifics. He also said the state needs to be tougher on people who violate existing gun laws.

A state law went into effect in September 2017 that allows churches to have armed volunteer security. Licensed handgun owners are also allowed to bring firearms into a place of worship as long as the church allows it, and a law passed earlier this year required churches to give notice to their congregations if they want to ban guns.

Churches, synagogues and mosques were previously off-limits to gun owners, but lawmakers decided to lift the restriction in response to the 2017 Sutherland Springs church shooting in which 26 victims were fatally shot and 20 more were wounded. The gunman in that attack also died.

O'Rourke, Castro, Cruz, Cornyn weigh in

Texas' former and current presidential candidates called for change in how gun violence is addressed.

"So saddened to hear about another church shooting in Texas, this one in White Settlement near Fort Worth," tweeted former Democratic Rep. Beto O'Rourke, who dropped out of the presidential race in November and is now focusing on helping Democrats win a majority in the Texas House. "Clearly what we are doing in Texas, what we are doing in this country, when it comes to guns is not working."

Former Housing and Urban Development Secretary and San Antonio mayor Julián Castro echoed O'Rourke.

"We can take steps to reduce these horrific attacks right now — we just need our elected leaders to have the courage to act," Castro tweeted.

Rep. Dan Crenshaw, R-Houston, pointed out that this was the second attack in less than 24 hours on worshippers, following a Saturday night knife attack at a Hanukkah celebration in New York that left 5 people injured. Crenshaw called on Americans to "work together to stop the growing hatred in our country."

"This season is supposed to be one of faith, family and love," Crenshaw said. "But evil cowards are trying to make it grief-ridden by attacking our churches and synagogues. We will not allow them to win."

Texas Sen. Ted Cruz also called the attacker "evil" on Twitter before thanking those who shot the gunman.

"We are also grateful to the local law enforcement & brave men & women of the congregation who helped stop the shooter," he wrote. "By courageously putting your own lives in harm's way today, you helped save many others."

Sen. John Cornyn praised the worshippers who shot the gunman.

"Very sad. Fortunately there were citizens present prepared to prevent further loss of life," he said on Twitter.

Cornyn Tweets/Retweets

12/30/2019 "Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms -- to chose one's attitudes in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way." -- Viktor Frankl (1905-1997) former prisoner of a Nazi concentration camp Source: Man's Search for Meaning

12/29/2019 Very sad. Fortunately there were citizens present prepared to prevent further loss of life. [LINK](#)

12/29/2019 Leader McConnell @senatemajldr Another horrifying anti-Semitic attack. Another terrible reminder that the fight against hate and bigotry, especially anti-Semitism, is far from finished, even right here at home. My condolences go out to the victims of last night's attack in Monsey.

12/29/2019 The annexation of the Republic of Texas by the United States, approved this day in 1845

12/29/2019 Socialists err dangerously when they assume a market economy is a conscious project, writes Barton Swaim [LINK](#)

12/28/2019 US blocks China as transit supplier - Taipei Times [LINK](#)

12/28/2019 Compare the second article of impeachment. Looks like Biden is doing something POTUS has been impeached for. #DoubleStandard anyone? QUOTE Senator John Cornyn @JohnCornyn Obstruction of Senate discharging its constitutional duties? [LINK](#)

12/28/2019 Join me in wishing Sen. Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.) a happy birthday. @SenatorIsakson

12/28/2019 "Schumer was elected to the Senate in 1998 after saying during his campaign that a vote for him would be a vote to not impeach Clinton" @CNN

12/28/2019 Obstruction of Senate discharging its constitutional duties? QUOTE Seung Min Kim @seungminkim Biden says he would not comply with a Senate subpoena in the impeachment trial of President Trump [LINK](#)

12/28/2019 Talking transportation infrastructure at recent meeting in DC with former Commerce Secretary Don Evans, now head of Permian Strategic Partnership, and Chairman Bruce Bugg, of Texas Department of Transportation. [LINK](#)

12/28/2019 The FBI gave Mrs. Clinton a pass while pursuing Mr. Trump even after the evidence fell apart, writes [LINK](#)

12/28/2019 Mexican Police Chief Arrested in Massacre of Mormon Family [LINK](#)

12/28/2019 Chuck, the Senate isn't going to pass exclusively partisan bills coming from the House. Dream on. We would rather confirm more federal judges. Meanwhile, you have 2X blocked my bipartisan bill to lower out of pocket costs for consumers, after admitting it a "good" bill. QUOTE Chuck Schumer @SenSchumer Senator McConnell: Why do you just keep burying all of these bills that would help American families in your legislative graveyard?

12/27/2019 Dan Crenshaw @DanCrenshawTX Fixed it for you: A federal court handed a win to the American people by ruling they can't be forced by government to buy specific insurance. And this makes you upset? No one is being forced off their coverage and you know it. Stop the blatant dishonesty and fear mongering. QUOTE Chris Murphy @ChrisMurphyCT Just the other week, a federal court handed a win to Republicans by ruling against the ACA. If this stands: - 130 million Americans w/ pre-existing conditions will lose protections - 20 million will lose insurance - Premiums + prescription drug prices will skyrocket @CAPAction

12/27/2019 Guy Benson @guypbenson "We have a pre-opinion," Schumer said. Pour one out for the "impartial juror" talking point. RIP. QUOTE Em Steck @emsteck NEW from @kfile and me

12/27/2019 Senator Mitt Romney @SenatorRomney Great news. While there is still much to be done, this law is a step in the right direction toward protecting our kids from a lifetime of nicotine addiction. QUOTE CNN @CNN A new law in the United States that prohibits the sale of tobacco products to anyone under the age of 21 is now in effect, according to the US Food and Drug Administration [LINK](#)

12/27/2019 Secretary Pompeo @SecPompeo I watched "The Report." Fiction. To be clear: the bad guys are not our intelligence warriors. The bad guys are the terrorists. To my former colleagues and all of the patriots at @CIA who have kept us safe since 9/11: America supports you, defends you and has your back. So do I.

12/27/2019 Team Cornyn @TeamCornyn Texas is strong. We're working to protect the future of Texas, delivering disaster aid to help communities in need. [VIDEO](#)

12/27/2019 The farce of endless, rolling, partisan impeachment. @KimStrassel LINK

12/26/2019 Nope. Private insurance subsidizes Medicare (and Medicaid) rates (hence my cost-shifting tweet, separately). Medical providers without private insurance patients can't afford to keep their doors open. M4A will bankrupt the American health care system. QUOTE Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez @AOC Keep going! You're so close to getting it!

12/26/2019 Wages for the typical worker—nonsupervisory employees who account for 82% of the workforce—are rising at the fastest rate in more than a decade LINK

12/26/2019 Erik Paulsen @ErikPaulsen Henry Miller and I write about my longtime priority to repeal medical device tax: America's Critical Medical Device Industry Gets A Needed Tax Cut LINK

12/26/2019 CBP @CBP On Sunday, Tucson Sector Border Patrol agents arrested a previously deported aggravated felon with a past conviction for lewd and lascivious acts with a child under 14. Details via @CBPArizona: PHOTO

12/26/2019 Not Medicare for All! QUOTE Sahil Kapur @sahilkapur Replying to @JohnCornynSenator, what do you believe is the right solution to address that?

12/26/2019 A lot of cost-shifting going on QUOTE Sahil Kapur @sahilkapur FACT CHECK: True LINK

12/26/2019 The Nasdaq just hit 9,000 for the first time, but index's biggest winners aren't the usual tech suspects - MarketWatch LINK

12/26/2019 Secretary Alex Azar @SecAzar I encourage all Americans to get your flu vaccination. Last year, millions became sick with the flu—an estimated 900k were hospitalized, and 80k died. By getting vaccinated, we can prevent the spread to those at greatest risk for becoming dangerously ill. #WhyIFightFlu

12/26/2019 Texas Agriculture @TexasDeptofAg Coming soon to a package near you: A glimpse of Big Bend National Park #TexasThings

12/26/2019 The Vaping-Marijuana Nexus LINK

12/26/2019 The SECURE Act is changing retirement — here are the most important things to know LINK

12/25/2019 Joe Gamaldi @JoeGamaldi Thanks @KHOUmelissa for stopping by the @HPOUTX and sharing Christmas with our officers. Also thanks for bringing goodies with you! #MerryChristmas

12/25/2019 Secretary of Defense Dr. Mark T. Esper @EsperDoD I extend my warmest wishes to our entire Department of Defense Family for a safe and enjoyable holiday season. I honor our service members who are deployed far from home ensuring the defense of our Nation.

12/25/2019 Always remember the reason for the season. #MerryChristmas from my family to yours.

12/25/2019 Team Cornyn @TeamCornyn Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas! May God bless you this holiday season. PHOTO

12/24/2019 Hugh Hewitt @hughhewitt The generosity of Americans is astonishing, and despite warnings of the increasing selfishness of the culture, of its secularization and divisive politics, this “moral sense” as the late James Q. Wilson called it, endures. QUOTE Hugh Hewitt @hughhewitt The radio and online audience have contributed more than \$303,000 to @SalvationArmyUS. This cares for the homeless, hungry, addicted. The

Army doesn't care about the religion, race, ethnicity or sexual orientation of those it serves. Thanks to all of you: [LINK](#)

[12/24/2019](#) Kelly Loeffler [@kloeffler](#) During the holiday season, we pause to celebrate the birth of Christ and remember His redemptive love for all of mankind. May your home be filled with joy, love, laughter, and peace. From my family to yours, Merry Christmas and God Bless! [#gapol](#)

[12/24/2019](#) NDAA [@ndaajustice](#) We are grateful that [@JohnCornyn](#)'s Courthouse Dogs Act has passed the Senate. "The use of certified courthouse dogs in the courtroom has expanded rapidly as a mechanism for calming and supporting individuals involved in courtroom proceedings." [LINK](#)

[12/24/2019](#) I recently stopped by to see [@fortworthpd](#) Chief Ed Kraus, Asst Chief Julie Swearingin & [@MannyRamirez_TX](#). Join me in thanking them, and all the men and women in blue, for keeping our communities safe during the holidays as we spend time with our families. [PHOTO](#)

[12/24/2019](#) Greg Abbott [@GregAbbott_TX](#) Early Christmas present: Texas employers add 37,500 jobs in November. The unemployment rate remains at record low 3.4 % for a sixth consecutive month. Even better, the low unemployment rate has boosted wages for employees. [#txlege](#) [LINK](#)

[12/24/2019](#) Expanding U.S. energy production would stress Russia's economy, potentially constraining its government budget and, by extension, its defense spending. [@RANDCorporation](#)

[12/24/2019](#) In 2017, the prices paid to hospitals for privately insured patients averaged 241 percent of what Medicare would have paid. [@RANDCorporation](#)

[12/24/2019](#) Beautiful Christmas Eve in Austin [PHOTO](#)

[12/24/2019](#) Surely your goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Psalm 23:6 [#ChristmasEve](#) [PHOTO](#)

[12/24/2019](#) Texas Farm Bureau [@TexasFarmBureau](#) The closest thing to a snowman Texas will see this Christmas! [PHOTO](#)

[12/24/2019](#) The House impeached Trump. The other house needs to hold a trial. [LINK](#)

[12/24/2019](#) Tax Reform has delivered for workers: [LINK](#)

--

Anna Lee Hirschi
617.519.9731

From: MJ Hegar [info@dsc.org]
Sent: 12/16/2019 7:22:29 PM
To: Justin Barasky [barasky@dsc.org]
Subject: re: Texas



Hi there,

I'm MJ Hegar. I'm a combat veteran, a mom, and a proud Texan -- **and I'm running for Senate against John Cornyn (R-TX).**

In a moment, I'm going to tell you what inspired me to run. But first: I need your help to overcome my GOP opponent's \$11 million war chest and win this race >>

I've spent my life going head to head with powerful forces. First, I was shot down by the Taliban in Afghanistan. I was wounded, but I strapped myself to the side of a helicopter and returned fire until we escaped.

My crew and I made it out, but my injuries prevented me from flying again. Then, I was told I couldn't serve in ground combat because I'm a woman. That just didn't sit right with me, so I took it up with the Pentagon -- **and won.**

I'm not afraid to stand up to power, but my Republican opponent sure is. He's Mitch McConnell's right-hand man and for far too long, he's let party bosses and corporate lobbyists control his Senate seat at the expense of the people he claims to represent.

But that seat belongs to the people of Texas -- **and I intend to take it back.**

Some folks have told me it's impossible because my opponent has nearly \$11 million to spend on this race, but **I'm not one to back down from a fight.** *The Washington Post* ranked this Senate seat as one of the most likely to flip next year -- but we can only win if we're in it together. If you're ready to take on the special interests and flip this seat, I need you on my team.

That's why I'm asking: will you join me? Pitch in \$5, and your contribution will be split between my campaign and the DSCC to help flip key Senate seats like this one in Texas.

Our kids deserve a better future than the one Washington is building for them. I want my two boys -- and every child in this country -- to be safe, healthy, and secure enough to chase the American dream the way I did.

That's why I'll fight to protect health care and lower costs. It's why I care about addressing climate

change, and building an economy that works for more than just the wealthy.

We can only build a better future if we're in it together. If you're with me, and I hope you are, will you split \$5 between my campaign and the DSCC now?

We've come *so close* to victory here in Texas. Now's our time. Texans are ready for change, and with grit, hope, and a lot of hard work, we're going to win this.

So saddle up, because we've got work to do y'all.

Thanks,

MJ

MJ Hegar, a combat veteran and working mom, is running for Senate in Texas. She's running to eliminate the influence of special interests and corporate money on Texas' Senate seat.

DONATE

*MJ Hegar served as a Major in the US Air Force and the Air National Guard and was honorably discharged after completing three tours of duty in Afghanistan. Use of her military rank, job, titles, and photographs in uniform does not imply endorsement from the Department of Defense, Air Force, or Air National Guard.

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From: Dominic Madera [dominic@mjfortexas.com]
Sent: 6/20/2019 11:22:51 AM
To: Kevin McKeon [kmckeon@putnampartners.net]; to: Cayce McCabe [cmccabe@putnampartners.net]; Anna Lee Hirschi [annalee@mjfortexas.com]; Anna Bukowski [bukowski@dsc.org]; Annie Levene [annie@risingtideinteractive.com]; Ashley Kennedy [ashley@fkandcompany.com]; Ben Waldon [waldon@dsc.org]; Brian Krebs [Brian@risingtideinteractive.com]; Brittany Kerrigan [bkerrigan@emilyslist.org]; Emily Parcell [parcell@wildfirecontact.com]; John Coady [coady@mjfortexas.com]; Justin Barasky [barasky@dsc.org]; Lauren Passalacqua [passalacqua@dsc.org]; Madison Goldstein [madison@mjfortexas.com]; Megan Hughes [hughes@dsc.org]; Mollie Binotto [mbinotto@emilyslist.org]; Neeraja Koneru [Neeraja@risingtideinteractive.com]; Pat Stranix [stranix@dsc.org]; Preston Elliott [preston@mjfortexas.com]; Stewart Boss [boss@dsc.org]; Zac McCrary [zac@algpolling.com]; Maeve Coyle [mcoyle@emilyslist.org]; Andrea Gonzalez [andrea@mjfortexas.com]; Amanda Sherman [amanda@mjfortexas.com]; Madera, Dominic [djm5@williams.edu]; Leah Lacure [leah@mjfortexas.com]; Nick Mattes [nick@mjfortexas.com]; Taylor Klos [taylor@mjfortexas.com]
Subject: MJ Hegar Clips 6/20

Press Clips

GOP frets about Trump's poll numbers (6/19/19) [The Hill]

By Reid Wilson

...Cornyn is taking no chances in his own bid for a fourth term. He ended March with \$7.4 million in the bank. He is likely to face M.J. Hegar, a business consultant and a veteran of the war in Afghanistan who narrowly lost a challenge to Rep. John Carter (R) in 2018....

MJ Hegar Tweets/retweets

[6/19 Tweet] As your senator, I'll right this wrong and get Texas back our bragging rights. Ok, I guess I can't really promise the biggest longhorns but I CAN promise to fight for our agricultural community, health care, voting rights, and our planet. EMBED TWEET

[6/19 Tweet] Note to John Cornyn: not doing your job just because you don't think anyone is worried about it IS NOT what Texans expect and deserve from their Senator. Our government only works if each co-equal branch does its job. Oh, and as Texans we do care.

[6/19 Tweet] So excited to have you with us, Amanda. You're a rock star, and we're lucky to have you on the team! Breakfast tacos on me... REPLY

[6/19 Tweet] On Juneteenth, we mark the end of slavery in Texas by honoring those who endured it and fought to end it. But the fight is not over and we must all work together to achieve the absolute equality for Black Americans that was promised here 154 years ago. LINK

Cornyn clips

Texans Cornyn, Cuellar can't get congressional colleagues to back their bipartisan immigration plan

(6/20/19) [Dallas News]

By Tom Benning

WASHINGTON -- Texas Sen. John Cornyn, a Republican, and Laredo Rep. Henry Cuellar, a Democrat, teamed up in early May to introduce far-reaching legislation they say would help solve the growing migration crisis at America's southern border.

A month and a half later, the high-profile effort is heading nowhere fast.

Neither Cuellar nor Cornyn has secured a single co-sponsor in their respective chambers. In the Senate, other GOP-led immigration legislation appears to be taking priority instead. In the House, opposition from key Texas Democrats signals that the duo's bill is all but dead.

"I have not been approached to support this bill nor do I sense any House Democratic support for this bill," said Rep. Filemon Vela, D-Brownsville, citing concern that the proposal would, among other things, bolster the contentious tactic of detaining migrant families.

The legislative quagmire serves as a microcosm of America's immigration debate.

Lawmakers have been vexed for decades over how to fix a broken system. That remains true as President Donald Trump pushes an aggressive border security approach and as record numbers of Central American migrants, many of them children, reach the U.S. through Mexico.

Incremental immigration fixes have on occasion moved forward through spending bills, such as a \$4.6 billion emergency measure Congress is now considering to address the border surge. But more systemic change has proved elusive amid intensifying partisan gridlock.

While Cornyn and Cuellar pitched their bill as a way to bridge the divide, it didn't take long for that veneer to crack.

Some Democrats see Cornyn as an unreliable partner on immigration. Cornyn sees Democratic leaders as unwilling to address the border crisis. Cuellar, while influential, is more conservative than many of his colleagues. Other Texas Democrats have their own immigration ideas.

The outcome, no matter who's to blame, is all too predictable.

"When it comes to immigration, everybody has different opinions," said Cuellar, an eight-term lawmaker who will next year will face a primary challenger from the left. "Unfortunately, we just haven't found common ground."

Cornyn and Cuellar introduced their bill, known as the HUMANE Act, amid a startling increase in apprehensions of migrants along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Their measure would, among other things, expedite the court process for those seeking asylum; allow unaccompanied children from Central American countries to voluntarily return to their home countries; and hire hundreds more U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents.

The legislation built upon an identically named bill they offered in 2014.

That version fizzled after receiving blowback from all sides. Immigration hardliners, comparing the bill to amnesty, said at the time that it would make it easier for migrants to get asylum. Immigrant rights groups, meanwhile, said it would harm children and deny due process rights.

The two lawmakers never agreed with that criticism. But they said they sought to allay those concerns this time around, while also stressing that the current crisis showed the need for action.

"Surely, they don't like the status quo," Cornyn said, referring to potential critics.

The Texans did succeed in winning over some of the skeptics -- at least on the right.

Dan Cadman of the Center for Immigration Studies, which advocates for stricter immigration laws, said the earlier HUMANE Act was "troubling." He said the latest iteration was "much different and vastly improved," thanks to provisions on staffing, visa overstays and other topics.

Another immigration hawk, Rosemary Jenks of NumbersUSA, agreed that the new version "looks pretty good." She said she saw "nothing that stands out to me as bad," arguing that the legislation would come pretty close to addressing many of the problems at the border.

But she also acknowledged the inverse implication of her praise.

"I would guess the happier I become with the bill, the less happy a lot of other people become," Jenks said.

Rep. Veronica Escobar, D-El Paso, can vouch for that, putting it bluntly that the bill by Cornyn and Cuellar is “not something I could ever support.”

She lamented a focus on detaining migrant families -- albeit together, rather than separate -- when she and others want to instead explore alternatives to detention. Her concern also extended to other provisions aimed at clearing the immigration backlog at the border.

“Incarcerating families for longer periods of time, in my opinion, is not humane,” she said. “Looking for ways to very quickly return children who are fleeing a desperate situation back to their homeland without due process is not humane.”

Cuellar has stressed that due process “would be protected.” He said the general idea is to “to try to stop the flow of people -- and for the ones that do come in, that we treat them with dignity.”

But Rep. Joaquin Castro, D-San Antonio, also raised worries, particularly over the provision that would allow unaccompanied children from Guatemala, Honduras and other countries farther afield to voluntarily return directly to their home countries.

“I have deep concerns about fair process for asylum seekers in this piece of legislation,” said Castro, who serves as chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. “Unless those are resolved, I don’t see it getting serious traction in the House.”

Some of the tension is even more elementary.

The Texas Democratic Party, which is marshaling resources against Cornyn’s re-election next year, recently highlighted what it called Cornyn’s “bad-faith efforts to derail commonsense immigration.” They cited earlier instances when the senator voted against bipartisan immigration bills.

Cornyn, in turn, said Democrats are to blame for the intransigence.

“Ms. Pelosi and the Democrats seem to think this is Donald Trump’s problem, and they’re not going to help him,” Cornyn said, referring to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. “Unfortunately, this is America’s problem. But they just can’t bring themselves to solve it.”

But other Democrats have their own solutions.

Escobar, for instance, listed several proposals: Provide permanent legal status for so-called Dreamers; fund more immigration judges and case workers; target more aid to Central America; task civilians with certain immigration-related jobs, thus freeing up law enforcement officers.

“There absolutely needs to be investment,” said the El Pasoan, a freshman lawmaker. “But it’s how you invest.”

Another twist is that Cornyn isn’t the only Senate Republican with immigration legislation.

Sen. Lindsay Graham, R-S.C., has pitched a narrower bill to address the border crisis. His standing as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee means his measure is moving forward -- at least in the Senate -- while Cornyn’s remains at a standstill.

The Texan said he wasn’t bothered by that dynamic.

Cornyn, who also serves on the committee, said Graham’s legislation has “a lot of common elements with my bill.” He explained that it’s “basically designed to do the same thing,” adding that he doesn’t “have any pride of authorship.”

Cornyn: Reimburse for migrant care (6/19/19) [Port Arthur News]

After conversations with local officials in Texas, U.S. Sen. John Cornyn sent a letter urging Senate appropriators to reimburse local Texas communities and non-governmental organizations for migrant care directly from the Department of Homeland Security.

In an issued statement, Cornyn said that due to increased border crossings in recent months, local governments and NGOs have spent significant resources on transportation, food and shelter for migrants, services which are typically provided by the federal government.

He sent the letter to Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Richard Shelby, R-Alabama, Senate Appropriations Committee Vice Chairman Patrick Leahy, D-Vermont, Homeland Security Subcommittee Chairwoman Shelley Moore Capito and Homeland Security Subcommittee Ranking Member Jon Tester, D-Montana.

"Along the border and throughout Texas, cities, counties, and NGO's have felt the effects of the historical levels of the migrant influx into the United States, primarily occurring in Texas," Cornyn, a Republican, wrote. "These local governments have gone above and beyond the call of duty in meeting the needs of transiting asylum seekers, UACs, and migrants through the diversion of millions of dollars in local taxpayer funds to provide transportation, food, and housing. "These precious funds collected from local citizens have been diverted away from their traditional, intended purpose such as providing clean drinking water, power, and public safety needs. Instead, these resources are being used to fill a role that has traditionally been filled by the federal government."

Cornyn noted that in this fiscal year, the U.S. Border Patrol has apprehended more than 593,000 people along the southern border, up 135 percent in apprehensions over the previous year. The crisis has had the greatest impact on Texas, he noted, as 66% of all Border Patrol apprehensions in Fiscal Year 2019 have occurred in the Border Patrol's El Paso, Del Rio and Rio Grande Valley sectors.

Qatar quandary: Marco Rubio says Al-Jazeera is a foreign agent, network disagrees (6/19/19) [Florida Politics]

By A.G. Gancarski

...Rubio and Republican Senate colleagues Chuck Grassley, Tom Cotton, John Cornyn, Todd Young, and Ted Cruz wrote a letter to the Department of Justice (DOJ) "to determine whether Qatari-owned media company Al-Jazeera should be registered as a foreign agent...."

Food Bank backs \$30 million proposed migrant care bill (6/19/19) [NBC San Antonio 4]

By Natali Castillo

SAN ANTONIO — Senator John Cornyn recently announced a proposed Border Bill, which would include \$30 million to reimburse Texas communities for migrant care.

The San Antonio Food Bank (SAFB) has been helping out migrants who have come through the Alamo City. The organization put out a statement backing the bill Wednesday.

"We want to thank Senator Cornyn for his leadership and giving a voice to Texas communities dealing with this humanitarian crisis. The SanAntonio Food Bank is known for its efficiencies. This investment to support basic needs and sustain human life will go a long way," said SAFB President and CEO, Eric Cooper in a press release."

The bill is a supplemental package, aimed to provide reimbursements to local governments, states, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for migrant care through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Sen. Cornyn sent a letter Tuesday to key appropriators requesting this inclusion after hearing from many local Texas officials and nonprofits that due to increased border crossings in recent months, local governments and NGOs have had to spend significant resources on services typically provided by the federal government.

New NAFTA deal could go to Congress in the coming weeks (6/19/19) [The Monitor]

By Mitchell Ferman

...“I have dealt with leadership in Congress and the speaker has been completely fair and above board,” Lighthizer told Senators on the Finance Committee on Tuesday, including U.S. Sen. John Cornyn.

[...]

“When do you expect the administration will send us that agreement to begin voting on?” Cornyn asked Lighthizer on Tuesday.

Lighthizer didn't provide a date, but said progress has been made.

“My hope is that over the next couple of weeks we can make substantial progress,” Lighthizer said. “I believe we're on track.”

Efforts to reduce drug prices stall amid pharmaceutical lobbying (6/19/19) [Open Secrets: the Center for Responsive Politics]

By Jessica Piper

...One target of pharmaceutical lobbying was a bill introduced by Sens. John Cornyn (R-Texas) and Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) in May. The Affordable Prescriptions for Patients Act would have classified certain patent practices as anticompetitive, making it easier for the Federal Trade Commission to bring lawsuits against drug companies that tried to block out generic alternatives.

[...]

“Drug companies have taken advantage of the patent system to maintain their monopoly on certain drugs and prevent generics from coming to market,” Cornyn said in a statement when his office announced the bill.

“These tactics mean Americans are forced to pay more for the life-saving medications they need. This bill puts patients first and reforms the system to encourage the availability of cheaper generics.”

Drug manufacturers were particularly concerned about Cornyn and Blumenthal's bill because of the potential for increased lawsuits, Bloomberg Government reported.

After backlash from the pharmaceutical industry, Cornyn said on Tuesday that the bill would see changes. Bloomberg Government reported that the Texas senator planned to modify the legislation to focus on the powers of the FDA, rather than the potentially stronger enforcement mechanisms of the FTC — a win for drug companies.

A spokeswoman for Cornyn said the changes would be minor.

“One section of the legislation is being modified to give the FDA authority to go after certain abusive behaviors and limit what drug companies can do to wrongfully keep competitors from coming to market,” the spokeswoman said. “There's more than one way to skin this cat, and this approach will achieve the same goal of lowering prices by giving authority both to the FTC and the FDA. We're optimistic we can better achieve bipartisan consensus and move the legislation forward in the Senate with this minor change.”

In addition to their vigorous lobbying efforts, drug manufacturers are major campaign donors to politicians on both sides of the aisle. The three biggest pharmaceutical PACs, Pfizer, Amgen and AbbVie, gave more than \$2.6 million to federal candidates during the 2018 midterm cycle, including a combined \$3,000 to Cornyn. Blumenthal received \$7,000 from Pfizer and \$1,000 from Amgen during the 2016 cycle, when he was up for reelection....

Cornyn Honors Juneteenth with Senate Resolution(6/19/19) [Crossroads - ABC 25]

By Drew Brandewie and Libby Sharp [Press Release]

WASHINGTON - U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) introduced a Senate resolution in honor of Juneteenth. Text is below, and you can view the full resolution [here](#).

"Designating June 19, 2019, as "Juneteenth Independence Day" in recognition of June 19, 1865, the date on which news of the end of slavery reached the slaves in the Southwestern States.

Whereas news of the end of slavery did not reach the frontier areas of the United States, in particular the State of Texas and the other Southwestern States, until months after the conclusion of the Civil War, more than 2 1/2 years after President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863;

Whereas, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, arrived in Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War had ended and the enslaved were free;

Whereas African Americans who had been slaves in the Southwest celebrated June 19, commonly known as "Juneteenth Independence Day", as inspiration and encouragement for future generations;

Whereas African Americans from the Southwest have continued the tradition of observing Juneteenth Independence Day for more than 150 years;

Whereas Juneteenth Independence Day began as a holiday in the State of Texas and is now celebrated in 45 States and the District of Columbia as a special day of observance in recognition of the emancipation of all slaves in the United States;

Whereas Juneteenth Independence Day celebrations have been held to honor African-American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures;

Whereas the faith and strength of character demonstrated by former slaves and the descendants of former slaves remain an example for all people of the United States, regardless of background, religion, or race;

Whereas slavery was not officially abolished until the ratification of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States in December 1865; and

Whereas, over the course of its history, the United States has grown into a symbol of democracy and freedom around the world: Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates June 19, 2019, as "Juneteenth Independence Day";

(2) recognizes the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day to the United States;

(3) supports the continued nationwide celebration of Juneteenth Independence Day to provide an opportunity for the people of the United States to learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped the United States; and

(4) recognizes that the observance of the end of slavery is part of the history and heritage of the United States."

Sen. Cornyn: Texas 'No Longer the Reliably Red State' Read Newsmax: Sen. Cornyn: Texas 'No Longer the Reliably Red State' (6/19/19) [News Max]

By Erick Mack

Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, is warning Texas Republicans to do their job or else bear the burden of having turned the "no longer reliably red state" purple, if not blue. Read Newsmax: [Sen. Cornyn: Texas 'No Longer the Reliably Red State' | Newsmax.com](#)

"We are, I think, no longer the reliably red state we have been," Sen. Cornyn told The Texas Tribune. "We are at risk of turning purple. And if we don't do our job, then we could turn blue in the coming years."

Cornyn's comments come as President Donald Trump has reportedly been trailing former Vice President Joe Biden in Texas' media and internal campaign polls, the latter of which is from leaks that led to the firing of three Trump campaign pollsters.

"Everything's changed," Cornyn told the Tribune. "I think 2018 woke up everybody on the Republican side to the fact that we not only need to be competitive in the primaries, but we need to talk to broader general election voters, too."

Cornyn is running for re-election in 2020 and will appear as the top Republican right under President Trump on the Texas ballot. Regardless of President Trump's polling, Texas is no longer a gimme for Republicans, per the report.

"He's unbeatable in a regular year, but this is not a regular year," former Cornyn aide Bill Miller told the Tribune. "A presidential year like this one changes the outlook. Otherwise, he's unbeatable in the state of Texas." Cornyn is warning statewide Republicans are "frankly a little bit complacent" and have lost a grip on how to battle in a tough general election.

"I think that's absolutely the case," Cornyn told the Tribune. "The way congressional districts are drawn, most members don't have competitive general elections."

And, most notable, the campaign money in Texas needs to stay in Texas and not be shipped out to the rest of the country, perhaps even bring money in, he said. "Texas has been a donor state for a long time," he told the Tribune. "Perhaps it's time we are a donee state."

Nearly 500,000 Texans Live in Communities with Contaminated Groundwater. Lawmakers Aren't Doing Much About It. (6/19/19) [Texas Observer]

By Christopher Collins

...In Congress, U.S. senators and representatives from both parties have filed a flurry of legislation meant to speed the cleanup of contaminated sites and keep the chemical from further penetrating groundwater supplies. One bill, authored by Senator Thomas Carper, a Delaware Democrat, would require the EPA to designate PFAS as a "hazardous substance," prompting reporting of the chemicals' release into the environment. Though more than half the Senate, including some Republicans, have signed on to the bill as co-sponsors, neither Ted Cruz nor John Cornyn is among them....

Cornyn Tweets/Retweets

[6/20 Tweet] Why the Dow Jones Industrial Average 30,000 may come very soon - Yahoo Finance LINK

[6/20 Retweet] Doug Ducey: Great to run into Texas Senator @JohnCornyn at the @TheWilsonCenter's @MexicoInstitute this morning #USMxBorder

[6/20 Retweet] TX Assn. of Bussiness: At the @MexicoInstitute for "Building a Competitive US-Mexico Border." #rgv2dc2019 @RGVPartnershipwilson @TXMexicoTrade @JohnCornyn @HurdOnTheHill @borderalliance @dougducey @MayorPeteSaenz @AztecDuncan IMAGES

[6/20 Retweet] TMTC Chairman @AldreteEddie and @txbiz CEO @Jeff_Moseley at the @MexicoInstitute talking with our Texas Congressional leaders about the importance of #USMCA. We congratulate #Mexico for demonstrating a strong commitment to fairer trade. Its time for our Congress to pass #USMCAnow

[6/20 Retweet] Mexico Institute: Senator @JohnCornyn on avoiding trade tariffs: I am happy that the relationship between the US and Mexico is such that they were able to negotiate a result together, which involves Mexico assigning more of its National Guard along its southern border. #UsMxBorder

[6/20 Retweet] Veronica Ortiz: Senator @JohnCornyn (TX) on the relevance of trade between #Mexico and #Texas. @MexicoInstitute @TheWilsonCenter IMAGE

[6/19 Tweet] Today, we confirmed our 80th district judge, for a total of 123 lifetime appointments to the federal bench since President Trump was inaugurated.

[6/19 Retweet] Dan Crenshaw: Good news coming out of Mexico. Now it's America's turn to ratify USMCA. LINK

[6/19 Retweet] Tom Cotton: A history lesson is warranted: Senators James Eastland and Herman Talmadge were *Democrats*—as were other segregationists. @JoeBiden & them have nothing to do with "bipartisanship," so please leave GOP out of Democrats' debates about their party's troubled history on race.

[6/19 Tweet] Food Bank backs \$30 million proposed migrant care bill LINK

[6/19 Retweet] Sabrina Rodríguez: It's official. Mexico becomes the first North American country to ratify #USMCA. EMBED TWEET

[6/19 Retweet] TX Border Coalition: Cameron Co. Judge and Chair-Elect of @tbccoalition Eddie Trevino and Senator @JohnCornyn talking border security, #USMCA negotiations and produce imports during #rgv2dc2019 with @RGVPartnership. IMAGE

[6/19 Retweet] Mayor Ron Nirenberg: San Antonio is a compassionate city. Our faith leaders, non-profits & @COSAGOV have stepped up to aid asylum seekers Thank you Senator @JohnCornyn for advocating for cities of Texas, federal reimbursement & working w/ @RepCuellar @HurdOnTheHill @JoaquinCastrotx @RepLloydDoggett EMBED TWEET

[6/19 Retweet] Jack Fink: #NEW Senator @JohnCornyn announced a border supplemental package that includes \$30 million to reimburse local governments, states, & community groups who've provided assistance to migrants. "Through these reimbursements, we can take the burden off local communities..." @CBSDFW LINK

Team Cornyn Tweets/Retweets

[6/20 Tweet] Help #TeamCornyn #KeepTexasRed by volunteering for our campaign. LINK

Texas GOP Tweets/Retweets

[6/20 Tweet] Today, we confirmed our 80th district judge, for a total of 123 lifetime appointments to the federal bench since President Trump was inaugurated.

[6/19 Tweet] Let's win Texas BIGLY for @POTUS in 2020! Make a \$20.20 contribution to RPT today! <https://txgop.us/2JO73Ls> LINK

[6/19 Tweet] RPT Regional Field Director @mjohnson3586 stopped by the Juneteenth historical marker today where news of the Emancipation Proclamation was announced in Texas. #Juneteenth2019 IMAGE

[6/19 Tweet] Chuck Schumer is handpicking Hollywood Hegar's staff, too. Now her top two staffers are handpicked from D.C., not Texas. #TXSen EMBED TWEET

Drew Brandewie Tweets/Retweets

[6/19 Retweet] Texas Border Business: City of McAllen Applauds Sen. Cornyn's Efforts to Help Provide Funding for Continued Response to Immigrant Situation LINK

[6/19 Tweet] The Hill: "Democrats have done a U-turn...[they] now acknowledge there is a genuine humanitarian crisis" EMBED TWEET

Cornyn Twitter mentions

[6/19 Tweet] Robert Costa: For now, the Texas Senate race isn't getting much attention. But @JohnCornyn isn't expecting an easy race in a presidential election cycle and in the wake of Democratic momentum in the state last year. LINK

[6/19 Tweet] Texas Democratic Party: ICYMI: John Cornyn supports Judge who signed onto a letter calling transgender people delusional. "John Cornyn's judicial votes are a reflection of John Cornyn: hard-right and out of touch." --Texas Democratic Party Communications Director @abhirahmantx LINK

[6/19 Tweet] Texas Democratic Party: Texas Senators Approval Rating according to most recent polling: Cruz: 47% approve Cornyn: 37% approve For those who forget, Ted Cruz barely escaped defeat by just 2.56% in 2018. Bottom Line: The Texas Senate Race is a Tier-One Battleground in 2020.

[6/19 Tweet] Patrick Svitek: Cornyn on Allen West making noise about Senate run: Haven't talked to him about it. "My attitude is it's a free country and anybody who decides to run can do so." I'd point out I've already been endorsed by Trump, Cruz, etc. "I think we're in pretty good shape for the primary."

[6/19 Tweet] Patrick Svitek: Cornyn on Trump mass deportation threat: "I really was surprised to hear that announcement. From a practical standpoint, I don't know how that's possible. I won't say I'm anxious to hear what the plan is, but I need more information."

From: Regina Anderson [randerson@dsc.org]
Sent: 1/6/2020 4:30:35 PM
To: Real Time Clips [RealTimeClips@dsc.org]
Subject: TX-Texas Tribune: National Democrats jump into new lawsuit over Texas voter registration requirements

Texas Tribune: National Democrats jump into new lawsuit over Texas voter registration requirements

By Alexa Ura

1/6/2020

<https://www.texastribune.org/2020/01/06/texas-and-national-democrats-suing-state-over-voter-registration/>

In a sign of the state's flirtation with battleground status, Texas is being hit with a third voting rights lawsuit filed by national and Texas Democrats — this time targeting the state's voter registration requirements.

In a [federal lawsuit filed Monday](#) in San Antonio, the Texas Democratic Party and the campaign arms for Democrats in the U.S. House and Senate allege that Texas is violating the U.S. Constitution and federal and state law by rejecting voter registration applications without an original signature.

The legal challenge springs from a 2018 electoral kerfuffle over the Texas Secretary of State's rejection of more than 2,400 registration applications filled out by voters using Vote.org, a website run by a California nonprofit. That online application asked Texans to provide personal information and a picture of their signature to auto-populate a paper voter registration form that was then mailed to county registrars.

Days before a registration deadline that year, the secretary of state's office indicated that applications submitted through the website should be considered invalid because they included electronic signatures, not physical ones.

In the lawsuit, the Democrats argue the secretary of state's signature requirements are unconstitutional and impose "an arbitrary requirement that limits access to the franchise." While the state allows eligible Texans to submit registration applications in person, by mail or by fax, Texas law "makes no reference" to requiring an original signature, they argue in the legal challenge.

Citing violations of the First and 14th Amendments and the federal Civil Rights Act, the state and national Democrats want a federal judge to block the state from enforcing the original signature rule and keep county registrars from rejecting voter registration applications.

"This unconstitutional ban does not make an ounce of sense, and it is the kind of arbitrary voter suppression that we're working to tear down right now before even more harm is done to our Democracy," U.S. Rep Cheri Bustos of Illinois, who chairs the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, said in a statement.

A spokesman for the secretary of state's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the lawsuit. But in a [2018 statement on the issue](#), former Secretary of State Rolando Pablos pointed out that Texas doesn't allow residents to register to vote online and warned against relying on "websites that misleadingly claim to assist voters in registering to vote online by simply submitting a digital signature."

Texas' Republican leadership has long shot down efforts to enact online voter registration in the state. As of October, Texas was one of 13 states that didn't allow for online registration.

In suing the state, the Democrats pointed out that the secretary of state does allow for one kind of electronic signatures — those submitted on voter registration applications received through the Texas Department of Public Safety. That

agency allows Texans obtaining or renewing a driver's license in person to enter their signatures on electronic keypads, which then may be used to populate voter registration applications. (Texas has been wrapped up in separate litigation for more than a year over claims it is violating federal law by not allowing voters who deal with their driver's licenses online to reregister to vote.)

Bolstered by Republicans' narrowing margins of victory and polls showing that Texas might be at least slipping from the GOP, Democrats have signaled they see voting rights litigation — and the voters that might be helped through it — as part of their longterm strategy in the state.

The voter registration lawsuit marks the third legal challenge by Texas Democrats and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in recent months. The Democratic groups teamed up in October to challenge Texas' move to effectively end the use of what were known as temporary or mobile early voting sites. A month later, they filed a lawsuit challenging a longstanding state statute that puts candidates who belong to the same political party as the governor at the top of general election ballots.

From: Regina Anderson[O=EXCHANGE LABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=4217779680EC452AAB64F6342D954BC0-REGINA.ANDE]
Sent: Mon 1/6/2020 7:49:20 AM (UTC-06:00)
Subject: DSCC Morning Clips—January 6, 2020

DSCC MORNING CLIPS—JANUARY 6, 2020

National

- [Politico: Schumer ‘hopeful’ some Republicans will join calls for witnesses and documents](#)
- [Washington Post: Top Republican suggests changing Senate rules to begin Trump impeachment trial within days](#)
- [NYTimes \(Editorial\): Congress, Stop President Trump’s Rush to War With Iran](#)
- [Washington Post \(Editorial\): Senate Republicans close their eyes to presidential abuse](#)
- [Washington Post \(Opinion\): Trump floats yet another scam designed to rig his trial](#)
- [Washington Post \(Opinion\): Democrats shouldn’t let Republicans off the impeachment hook so early](#)
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- [Axios: 1 big thing: Pharma hikes prices for hundreds of drugs](#)
- [The Hill: Democrats' worries grow as ObamaCare court fight drags on](#)
- [Talking Points Memo: This Week: The Senate Standoff](#)
- [Politico Pro: Morning Score 1/6](#)

State

Alabama

- [AP: Alabama’s Doug Jones among senators to watch during Trump’s impeachment trial](#)

Arizona

- [Arizona Republic: Soleimani killing to test Sinema and McSally, could hang over Arizona's Senate race](#)
- [Roll Call: Arizona’s GOP Sen. Martha McSally target of new super PAC ad](#)

Colorado

- [Denver Post: Cory Gardner, facing impeachment questions from all sides, is mum as the Senate looks ahead](#)
- [Colorado Public Radio: With Bennet And Gardner Back To Work, What’s Next For Impeachment In The Senate?](#)
- [Colorado Politics: Democrat John Hickenlooper plans to circulate petitions and go through caucuses to get on US Senate primary ballot](#)
- [Colorado Independent: Littwin: Trump got us into this Iranian crisis, but can he get us out?](#)
- [Denver Post: “Terribly reckless”: Colorado Democrats criticize Iraq air strike](#)

Georgia

- [Atlanta Journal Constitution: Ossoff to report a seven-figure haul in his Senate bid in Georgia](#)
- [Atlanta Journal Constitution: Vice President Pence will swear Kelly Loeffler into the Senate on Monday](#)
- [Chattanooga Times Free Press: Georgians seeing political change before first 2020 ballot even cast](#)
- [WRBL: EXCLUSIVE VIDEO: U.S. Senator Kelly Loeffler tours West Point Kia Plant](#)
- [Marietta Daily Journal: Loeffler draws big crowd in Cobb](#)
- [Albany Herald \(Op-Ed\): KELLY LOEFFLER: Plucking the weeds to keep America prosperous and strong](#)
- [AP: Georgia's new GOP senator enters politics amid impeachment](#)
- [Roll Call \(Opinion\): Who is Kelly Loeffler?](#)

Iowa

- [KWIT: Iowa Senator Joni Ernst Applauds US Airstrike in Iran, Snow on the Way in North Central Iowa](#)
- [KSCJ: ERNST APPLAUDS MILITARY STRIKE AGAINST IRANIAN GENERAL](#)

Kentucky

- [Courier Journal: Democrat Charles Booker is running for US Senate in 2020](#)
- [Lexington Herald Leader: Kentucky lawmaker Charles Booker launches bid to unseat Mitch McConnell in 2020](#)

Maine

- [Bangor Daily News \(Editorial\): Impeachment is political, but senators must still strive to be impartial](#)
- [Press Herald: Health care, corrections, broadband at top of state legislative agenda](#)
- [NewsCenterMaine: Political Brew: Collins on impeachment, grades for Mills, and a deadly strike](#)
- [NYTimes: *With Split Decision on Impeachment, Maine Democrat Risks a Dual Backlash*](#)
- [AP: Maine US Senate candidate speaks out about tenure at Google](#)

Massachusetts

- [Boston Globe: Kennedy outpaced Markey in Senate fund-raising race in final months of 2019](#)

Michigan

- [WKAR: The Looming Battle For Michigan's Senate Seat](#)
- [ClickOnDetroit: WATCH: Michigan Sen. Gary Peters reacts after US kills Iran’s top general](#)
- [Michigan Radio: Senator Gary Peters officially on the 2020 ballot](#)

Mississippi

- [Clarion Ledger: U.S. Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith announces reelection effort, will face Mike Espy in November](#)

WMUR: NH Primary Source: State Democratic Party to hold major pre-primary fundraising dinner at SNHU Arena

Union Leader: Shaheen: Iranian general killed by Trump was terrorist responsible for deaths of U.S. servicemen

NHPR: Shaheen: 'War With Iran Is Not in Our Nation's Best Interest'

New Mexico

North Carolina

Triad City Beat: Tillis: Criticism of Trump's strike against Soleimani is 'reckless'; Democratic candidates' responses range from concern to condemnation

South Carolina

The State: Looking past outcome, Booker pledges he'll return to help SC Democrats win in 2020

NBC News: Graham threatens to 'take matters in our own hands' if Pelosi doesn't send articles of impeachment to Senate

Texas

Texas Tribune: Analysis: Texas elections aren't starting now — they're already running at full speed

KXAN: Republican Mark Yancey challenges John Cornyn in Senate primary

The Texan: 20 Texas Congressional Members Call for Supreme Court Overrule of Roe v. Wade

Statesman: Texas lawmakers react to US killing of top Iran general

Texas Observer: Questions About Politics in 2020 That Aren't 'Will Texas Turn Blue?'

DSCC Morning Clips—January 6, 2020

National

Politico: Schumer 'hopeful' some Republicans will join calls for witnesses and documents

By Marianne Levine

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said Sunday he remains “hopeful” that enough Republican senators will join Democratic calls for witnesses and documents in the forthcoming Senate impeachment trial. “I hope, pray and believe there’s a decent chance that four Republicans will join us — if they do, we will have a fair trial,” Schumer said on ABC’s “This Week with George Stephanopoulos,” noting the minimum number of Republicans that Democrats will need to follow through on their request. “I am hopeful that our Republican colleagues will come forward.” Schumer and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell remain at an impasse over the terms of the trial. Democrats want to decide on witnesses at the outset — and have called for acting White House chief of staff Mick Mulvaney and former Trump national security adviser John Bolton to testify. But Republicans have favored deciding on whether to call witnesses later on in the trial, after hearing from the House impeachment managers and the president’s defense.

Washington Post: Top Republican suggests changing Senate rules to begin Trump impeachment trial within days

By Rachael Bade

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Lindsey O. Graham suggested Sunday that Republicans should try to change Senate rules governing impeachment if House Speaker Nancy Pelosi continues to withhold the charges against President Trump — an unlikely 11th-hour bid to begin a trial within days without the actual documents. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) was unequivocal in a Senate floor speech on Friday that “we can’t hold a trial without the articles; the Senate’s own rules don’t provide for that.” But Graham (R-S.C.), a close ally of Trump, floated the idea of a unilateral GOP move, saying he would work with McConnell to allow the Senate to proceed without the two charges against Trump for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. The suggestion, while unlikely due to the high threshold of votes required for changing Senate impeachment rules, underscores the pressure some Trump allies feel as the president stewes over the impeachment delay.

NYTimes (Editorial): Congress, Stop President Trump's Rush to War With Iran

By Editorial Board

President Trump must doubt his administration’s own claims that it has deterred Iranian threats. “Let this serve as a WARNING that if Iran strikes any Americans, or American assets,” Mr. Trump tweeted on Saturday, “we have targeted 52 Iranian sites (representing the 52 American hostages taken by Iran many years ago), some at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture, and those targets, and Iran itself, WILL BE HIT VERY FAST AND VERY HARD. The USA wants no more threats!” The threat came after Ayatollah Ali

Case 5:20-cv-00046-OLG Document 86-1 Filed 06/15/20 Page 46 of 150

Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, vowed "forceful revenge" for an American drone strike early Friday that killed Maj. Gen. Qassim Suleimani, a top Iranian military commander, after, the White House claims, the general prepared attacks on American interests.

Washington Post (Editorial): Senate Republicans close their eyes to presidential abuse

By Editorial Board

NEW EVIDENCE continues to emerge, yet Republican senators, led by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), seem no more interested in conducting a serious inquiry into President Trump's corrupt Ukraine pressure campaign. "It's the Senate's turn now — to render sober judgment as the framers envisioned," Mr. McConnell declared Friday, even as he promised nothing of the sort, dismissing calls for the Senate to demand still-hidden documents and the appearance of key witnesses as it considers removing Mr. Trump from office. Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine), while professing to be "open to witnesses," said it is "premature to decide who should be called until we see the evidence that is presented."

Washington Post (Opinion): Trump floats yet another scam designed to rig his trial

By Greg Sargent

You may not remember this, but there was a time a few weeks ago when President Trump was claiming he badly wanted an impeachment trial in the Senate because, unlike the House's proceedings, the trial would be "fair" to him. The president even loudly boasted that it would play to his benefit, because it would feature "witnesses" such as former vice president Joe Biden and his son Hunter. They have nothing whatsoever to do with the corrupt conduct for which Trump has been impeached, but calling them might allow Trump to keep smearing Biden with lies in advance of the 2020 election. Since then, we've learned that Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) isn't so sure this is a good idea, because it could produce an unpredictable circus. Worse, it might mean Democrats call the witnesses they want, which must be prevented at all costs, because those witnesses actually do have direct knowledge of Trump's corrupt freezing of military aid to Ukraine, which he did to extort its president into doing his political dirty deeds.

Washington Post (Opinion): Democrats shouldn't let Republicans off the impeachment hook so early

By Ruth Marcus

Democrats face risks in delaying and prolonging the impeachment debate. Prime among them is the collision of the presidential primary calendar with a Senate trial — especially when the outcome does not appear in doubt and voters will render the ultimate verdict on President Trump in November. But there are risks in the other direction as well, to constitutional duty and to history, that argue in favor of standing firm on the demand for witnesses and documents. It's premature for Democrats to move on. It may not even be smart politics. Even as the House voted to approve two articles of impeachment, it was abundantly clear there was more relevant testimony to which lawmakers are constitutionally entitled. That has become even more apparent in the weeks since, with additional revelations on Trump's personal involvement in withholding aid to Ukraine. You can argue about whether the House should have acted before pursuing this information, but that is irrelevant to the position in which the Senate now finds itself.

Politico: Trump's 2020 trade vision: More disruption

By Doug Palmer

President Donald Trump has threatened to blow up the established order of international trade to get fairer terms for the United States. But after three years of tariff hikes and trade negotiations that have yielded some gains, the jury is still out on whether his get-tough approach has produced better results than the tactics of predecessors who were less willing to wreak havoc to get their way. "The Administration has made progress on the trade front, but it's not come without risks and uncertainty," said Myron Brilliant, executive vice president and head of international affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. "We are at halftime and we don't know yet the final score." In 2020, Trump could shift some of his attention away from China and toward the European Union and the United Kingdom in an effort to redefine the U.S. relationship with both trading partners in the post-Brexit world. But trade with Beijing and Tokyo will remain in the spotlight, as U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer embarks on "phase-two" negotiations with both countries.

Roll Call: Name Trump or not? Senate responses to Soleimani killing highlight 2020 tightrope

By Bridget Bowman

Mixed responses to the U.S. military drone strike that killed a top Iranian leader highlighted the tightrope that politically vulnerable senators walk this year when it comes to praising or criticizing President Donald Trump. Congressional reaction fell largely along party lines to Trump's order that led to the death in Iraq Thursday of Iranian Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, leader of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps. While there was universal condemnation of Soleimani's role in terrorist strikes and support for militants who battled Americans, Republicans cheered Trump's use of force while Democrats questioned whether he had congressional authorization and a strategy to deal with Iranian retaliation. But three Republicans running in states where Trump is not overwhelmingly popular did not mention the president by name in their statements. Nor did a Democrat in a top battleground state.

Axios: 1 big thing: Pharma hikes prices for hundreds of drugs

By Caitlin Owens

Pharmaceutical companies began 2020 the same way they begin every year: with price hikes on hundreds of drugs.

Between the lines: The price increases are salt in the wound following Congress' failure to pass meaningful drug price legislation in 2019, and are already being used to make the political case for action this year.

By the numbers: As of Friday, drug companies had increased the prices of 445 products by a median of 5%, according to an analysis by 3 Axis Advisors. More hikes are expected throughout January.

- Pfizer increased the prices of 58 drugs, the most of any company by far. Novartis, Allergan and GlaxoSmithKline each had counts in the twenties.

Some notable increases, per Axios' Bob Herman:

- **AbbVie:** ↑ 7.4% on Humira, the world's top-selling drug that is facing major competition and lower prices everywhere — except the U.S.
- **Biogen:** ↑ 6% on Tecfidera, a multiple sclerosis drug that is facing a major patent lawsuit.
- **Gilead:** ↑ 4.8% on a host of medicines, including its main HIV drugs (Truvada, Descovy and Biktarvy).
- **Purdue Pharma:** ↑ 5% on its OxyContin painkiller, all while the company sits in bankruptcy court and the Sackler owners dangle billions in public settlement funds.

The Hill: Democrats' worries grow as ObamaCare court fight drags on

By Peter Sullivan

A federal appeals court ruling on a case threatening ObamaCare is raising the stakes for the health law and the Supreme Court in the 2020 election. ObamaCare supporters worry the law could be in jeopardy if President Trump is reelected and gets the opportunity to appoint another Supreme Court justice. Most observers in both parties assume the current makeup of the Supreme Court would uphold the Affordable Care Act, given the skepticism over the arguments in the lawsuit challenging the law. But if the fight in the lower courts drags on and Trump is reelected with the chance to replace one of the liberal justices, it would throw the future of ObamaCare into more doubt.

Talking Points Memo: This Week: The Senate Standoff

By Nicole Lafond

Senate standoff: Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) remain at an impasse over how they want to handle an impeachment trial in the upper chamber. The Washington Post reported this week that the two didn't talk once over the holidays about how to conduct a trial and the division burst out into the open on Friday morning when both made speeches from the Senate floor outlining their disdain for the other's approach. While McConnell may not budge on Schumer's interest in bringing new witnesses to the chamber to testify, members of his caucus appear to not be quite so opposed. Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME), considered a key swing vote on impeachment in the Senate, indicated this week that she would be open to hearing new witnesses' testimony.

Politico Pro: Morning Score 1/6

THE CASH DASH — The first congressional numbers have started to trickle in (and if you have numbers to share, please email me).

— **KY-Sen:** Democrat Amy McGrath raised \$6.2 million and will report \$9.1 million in the bank. Campaign

— **MA-Sen:** Democratic Sen. Ed Markey is being outpaced by his primary challenger Rep. Joe Kennedy. Kennedy raised \$2.4 million in the quarter to Markey's \$1.4 million, per The Boston Globe's Victoria McGrane. Kennedy has \$5.5 million in cash on hand and Markey had \$4.4 million.

THE SENATE MAP — Republican Blake Masters, who has close ties to Trump ally Peter Thiel, is passing on a primary challenge to Arizona Sen. Martha McSally. The Arizona Republic's Yvonne Wingett Sanchez reported that Masters met with former Sen. Jon Kyl, Gov. Doug Ducey and "at least one prominent GOP donor" before deciding not to run.

— **Rep. Doug Collins (R-Ga.) said he's still** mulling a primary challenge to the soon-to-be-sworn-in Sen. Kelly Loeffler. "We are looking at it, and we'll be making a decision soon," he said on Fox on Sunday.

— **Democrat Charles Booker, a Kentucky state representative**, announced he'll run for the Senate (he had previously formed an exploratory committee), per the Lexington Herald-Leader's Daniel Desrochers.

State

Alabama

AP: Alabama's Doug Jones among senators to watch during Trump's impeachment trial

By Staff

The Senate seems certain to keep President Donald Trump in office thanks to the overwhelming GOP support expected in his impeachment trial. But how that trial will proceed — and when it will begin — remains to be seen. Democrats are pushing for the Senate to issue subpoenas for witnesses and documents, pointing to reports that they say have raised new questions about Trump's decision to withhold military aid from Ukraine.

Arizona

Arizona Republic: Soleimani killing to test Sinema and McSally, could hang over Arizona's Senate race

By Yvonne Wingett Sanchez

Arizona's Sens. Kyrsten Sinema and Martha McSally are set to return to Capitol Hill on Monday, days after a targeted U.S. airstrike killed Iran Quds Force commander Qasem Soleimani and shook the Middle East. Soleimani's death, which has fueled anxieties about war between Iran and the United States, happened as Sinema, D-Ariz., and McSally, R-Ariz., marked their first year in the Senate and as McSally's Senate race against Democrat Mark Kelly is poised to heat up. A military confrontation with Iran would be the biggest national-security challenge faced by the two freshmen in their short tenures in the Senate. Sinema and McSally are expected to attend a classified briefing early next week that Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said he is arranging to discuss the high-level military operation in Iraq.

Roll Call: Arizona's GOP Sen. Martha McSally target of new super PAC ad

By Bridget Bowman

A new super PAC is targeting GOP Sen. Martha McSally in an early sign that the competitive Arizona Senate race could attract plenty of outside spending. The group, named "Middle Class Fighting to Restore Arizona's Unity and Decency," or "McFraud," is launching a five-figure TV and digital ad buy with a 30-second spot accusing McSally of changing her positions on immigration issues and highlighting an Arizona Republic editorial that labeled her as "disingenuous." The ad will air in the Phoenix media market on CNN and Fox News, according to information shared first with CQ Roll Call. "Arizonans rejected flip-flopper Martha McSally's brand of anti-worker politics in 2018 and we are confident they will again in 2020," said Frank Hawk, vice president of the Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters, one of the groups funding the super PAC.

Colorado

Denver Post: Cory Gardner, facing impeachment questions from all sides, is mum as the Senate looks ahead

By Justin Wingerter

On Monday, the full U.S. Senate convenes for the first time in 2020 with a historic question before it: how best

to conduct a trial of the president of the United States. As it awaits the transfer of articles of impeachment from the House, the Senate must determine whether the trial of President Donald Trump for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress should be quick or lengthy, and who will testify. Colorado's Democratic senator has been outspoken on both questions. Its Republican senator, Cory Gardner, has not. Gardner's every move is being closely watched as calendars flip to 2020, a year that will decide his political future. And in the Senate, where impeachment rules will require a simple majority vote, he can play the role of decider within the narrow Senate Republican majority. But he and his office have not answered questions about his impeachment preferences.

Colorado Public Radio: With Bennet And Gardner Back To Work, What's Next For Impeachment In The Senate?

By Caitlyn Kim

As senators return to Washington, D.C. after two weeks away, it's still unclear on when an impeachment trial for President Donald Trump would begin. Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Minority Leader Chuck Schumer continue to spar over whether witnesses should be called in any Senate trial. McConnell argues that should be decided after opening arguments, senator questions and other motions, as happened during the Clinton impeachment trial. But Schumer counters, if anything, during the two-week break more questions have been raised about the hold up of military aid Ukraine. He also said that the Clinton trial is not a good comparison because the witnesses had already testified in the House. The witnesses and the documents the Democratic leader seeks were not available during the House impeachment inquiry. Courtney Gidner, a spokesperson for Sen. Michael Bennet, said that Colorado's senior senator "strongly believes that the American people deserve to know all of the facts."

Colorado Politics: Democrat John Hickenlooper plans to circulate petitions and go through caucuses to get on US Senate primary ballot

By Ernest Luning

Democratic U.S. Senate candidate John Hickenlooper plans to pursue a spot on Colorado's June primary ballot using two methods — gathering petition signatures and going through the caucus and assembly process, his campaign said Friday. The former two-term governor and two-term mayor of Denver is one of eight Democrats hoping to challenge U.S. Sen. Cory Gardner, one of the most vulnerable Republican senators on the ballot next year. By most measures, he's the frontrunner in a field made up mostly of novice politicians. Taking both routes to the ballot can be risky — candidates who fail to meet a relatively low threshold at the state assembly are barred from petitioning — but the move can also keep opponents out of the primary by denying them enough delegate votes to qualify.

Colorado Independent: Littwin: Trump got us into this Iranian crisis, but can he get us out?

By Mike Littwin

Let's begin with the obvious. Two things: Donald Trump has put us onto the path of a possible catastrophe, and Donald Trump is the one now charged with heading off this very real chance of catastrophe. God help us. This would be the same Donald Trump who can't be trusted to tell the truth about the path of a hurricane much less about the decision to go to war, or near-war, or however you'd describe the present situation. And in case you've forgotten, it's also the same Donald Trump who walked away from the Iran nuclear deal because, well, it was Barack Obama's nuclear deal. You can make a reasonable argument that if Trump hadn't walked away, we would not be in this fix. And, yeah, it's the same Donald Trump who tells us he knew the war in Iraq was a disaster from the beginning — although that may not be quite true — and now tells us that we're not on the brink of disaster in Iran.

Denver Post: "Terribly reckless": Colorado Democrats criticize Iraq air strike

By Justin Wingerter

Colorado Democrats in Congress were critical Friday of President Donald Trump's decision to kill a top Iranian military official and cause a dramatic escalation of Middle East tensions. The state's congressional Republicans applauded the action. "I think this was a terribly reckless and provocative act," said Sen. Michael Bennet, a Denver Democrat and presidential candidate, on WGBH Radio in Boston. "It's the latest in a long string of nonstrategic choices that Donald Trump has made in the Middle East, that has weakened our position in the Middle East, that has strengthened Iran's position in the Middle East. "And I think you couldn't be more naive to believe that this was going to result somehow in Iran coming to the negotiating table, rather than creating the potential for another war — which is the last thing we need in the Middle East," Bennet

Georgia

Atlanta Journal Constitution: Ossoff to report a seven-figure haul in his Senate bid in Georgia

By Greg Bluestein

Democrat Jon Ossoff will report raising more than \$1 million for his U.S. Senate bid over the last three months as he races to establish himself as the frontrunner in a contest with three other well-known contenders competing to challenge Republican David Perdue. Ossoff told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution that his fundraising haul includes contributions from more than 19,000 donors, including roughly 96% that were under \$200. He also said he added nearly 8,000 new donors who had not given to his 2017 campaign for a U.S. House seat. The Ossoff campaign did not release how much cash it has in its account. He reported in October roughly \$1.3 million in cash on hand, the most of any Democratic rivals in the race.

Atlanta Journal Constitution: Vice President Pence will swear Kelly Loeffler into the Senate on Monday

By Tia Mitchell

Kelly Loeffler's swearing on Monday evening will follow Senate traditions, including a walk down the aisle with her Georgia colleague, the vice president presiding and an immediate do-over for the cameras. Here is the rundown: U.S. Sen. David Perdue will escort Loeffler down the aisle, adhering to the tradition of the senior senator leading his her counterpart down the aisle. Vice President Mike Pence, in his role as the Senate's president, will administer the oath of office around 5 p.m. Loeffler will carry a family Bible that she will use to swear upon.

Chattanooga Times Free Press: Georgians seeing political change before first 2020 ballot even cast

By Andy Sher

Georgia politics are getting shaken by departures before voters cast their first ballots in 2020. As planned, Republican Johnny Isakson stepped down New Year's Eve from the U.S. Senate seat he's held since 2015, citing health issues. On Monday, financial executive Kelly Loeffler, appointed by Gov. Brian Kemp to replace Isakson, will be sworn in as senator by Vice President Mike Pence, The Atlanta Journal Constitution has reported. Loeffler plans to run for election and may face opposition in the May 19 GOP primary. U.S. Rep. Doug Collins, R-Gainesville, who had a high-profile role in opposing the House's impeachment of President Donald Trump, is weighing a bid.

WRBL: EXCLUSIVE VIDEO: U.S. Senator Kelly Loeffler tours West Point Kia Plant

By Chuck Williams & Samuel Sachs

U.S. Senator-designate Kelly Loeffler toured the Kia plant in West Point, Ga. Loeffler was recently appointed to temporarily fill retiring U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson's seat until the upcoming November elections. Loeffler officially takes office on Jan. 6. While at the Kia plant, facility managers took her on a tour of the site, where she said she learned a lot. The incoming Senator has already announced plans to run for the open Senate seat in the November election in order to finish Isakson's original term after his reelection in 2016. Sen. Isakson retired, effective Dec. 31, 2019, due to health concerns arising from Parkinson's disease. Loeffler gave News 3 exclusive video and talked about her goals for her time in office. She hopes to serve Georgians in Washington and work with the President to

Marietta Daily Journal: Loeffler draws big crowd in Cobb

By Ross Williams

Georgia's next U.S. senator stopped by Marietta on Saturday, making her final public appearance in the state before she is sworn in by Vice President Mike Pence in a ceremony scheduled for Monday in Washington. Senator-designate Kelly Loeffler spoke at the county Republican Party's monthly breakfast where, for the first time ever, tickets sold out four days before the event. The main hall of the Roswell Street building was stuffed to the gills, and more conservatives from around the metro area listened in from the lobby. "I think this represents the best of what we need from the 2020 election," Loeffler said. "We need the full support of the party, but we also need to welcome new people, and this is part of the reason I put my hand up to serve our state. I want to help broaden our party, communicate the values that we have as Republicans and conservatives."

By Kelly Loeffler

Growing up on our family farm, my first real job was pulling weeds in our corn and soybean fields. One by one, day after day. The task was simple, but pivotal, because left alone, these weeds could reduce our harvest yields. In church, I was taught that God finds a way to prepare you for the challenges and opportunities ahead. Which is why I believe that simple job on the farm — plucking weeds from hundreds of acres of corn and soybeans — was perfect training for my next one. As Georgia's next United States Senator, I will champion pro-life policies, protect our Second Amendment Rights, and work for Georgians and all Americans to keep our country great. But my first vote — and arguably the most important one — will be to end the impeachment sham so that we can get back to work on the real challenges facing our great country.

AP: Georgia's new GOP senator enters politics amid impeachment

By Ben Nadler

A wealthy Republican businesswoman set to be sworn in as Georgia's next U.S. senator will enter the chamber with a unique distinction: Her first vote could be on whether to remove the president. Kelly Loeffler is scheduled to be sworn in at 5 p.m. Monday during a short ceremony on the Senate floor in Washington. Her first vote as a senator could come at the conclusion of President Donald Trump's impeachment trial on charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress — and Loeffler says she plans to vote against removing the president.

Roll Call (Opinion): Who is Kelly Loeffler?

By Patricia Murphy

When Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp appointed Kelly Loeffler to fill the Senate seat of the beloved-but-ailing Sen. Johnny Isakson, a single headline said it all, repeated many times over. “Who is Kelly Loeffler?” the Atlanta-Journal Constitution, the local NBC affiliate, and Atlanta's NPR station asked almost in unison. Loeffler, 49, was such an unknown outside of Republican fundraising circles that even longtime political reporters struggled with the pronunciation of her last name. Was it LOFF-ler or LOW-fler? (Neither. It's LEFF-ler.) In the month since Loeffler was named by Kemp, Georgians have mostly learned three things about their new senator. First, as she has stressed in all of her public appearances, Loeffler grew up on her family's corn and soybean farm in Illinois. Second, she is conservative. On the day she was appointed, Loeffler declared herself “pro-Second Amendment, pro-military, pro-Wall and pro-Trump.” Third, she is very, very rich.

Iowa

KWIT: Iowa Senator Joni Ernst Applauds US Airstrike in Iran, Snow on the Way in North Central Iowa

By Mary Hartnett

Iowa's junior Senator is applauding the airstrike on Iran that killed its top general. Iran has vowed, “harsh retaliation” for the attack. But Iowa Senator Joni Ernst, a retired member of the Iowa National Guard, spoke out on Twitter about the situation. She said, “America and our world is safer (because of Soleimani's death).” She added, “Soleimani orchestrated heinous and reckless actions, including the slaughter of Americans, for far too long. Now, at the direction of President Trump, he has been brought to justice before he could kill even more Americans.”

KSCJ: ERNST APPLAUDS MILITARY STRIKE AGAINST IRANIAN GENERAL

By Woody Gottburg

U.S. Senator Joni Ernst of Iowa has released a statement on the killing of Iran's Major General in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. A U.S. Military drone strike near the Baghdad, Iraq airport killed Qassem Soleimani, along with other Iranian commanders. Ernst says “Soleimani orchestrated heinous and reckless actions, including the slaughter of Americans, for far too long. Now, at the direction of President Trump, he has been brought to justice before he could could kill even more Americans. I applaud the work of U.S. military personnel in carrying out this mission. America, and our world, is safer because of Soleimani's death.”

Kentucky

By Phillip M. Bailey

Freshman state Rep. Charles Booker ended weeks of speculation on Sunday by declaring he will seek the Democratic nomination in Kentucky's much-anticipated 2020 Senate race. "Kentuckians are demanding real change, and we are sick and tired of the political status quo," Booker said in an interview with The Courier Journal. "Regardless of party, Kentuckians are tired of being ignored, lied to, forgotten and exploited by corrupt politicians who couldn't care less about us." Booker, 35, first hinted at a possible run in July after a rocky rollout by presumed Democratic frontrunner Amy McGrath, who upset some progressives when she said McConnell hasn't done enough to help President Donald Trump keep his pledge to "drain the swamp" in Washington.

Lexington Herald Leader: Kentucky lawmaker Charles Booker launches bid to unseat Mitch McConnell in 2020

By Daniel Desrochers

After more than a month of buildup, State Rep. Charles Booker, D-Louisville, announced Sunday that he will officially enter the race to challenge U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell in 2020. "Today I am announcing my candidacy for United States senate," Booker said to cheers. "It's go time. This is our time. This ain't about me, this is about us." More than a hundred young, diverse supporters crowded into Manhattan on Broadway in Louisville as Booker painted his candidacy as part of a broader political movement that couldn't wait for a more politically opportune time to run for office. "We cannot be politically calculating right now," Booker said. "This is not a time to be protesting. This is not a time to dance around and play politics because we're dying while politics gets played. This is our time to be bold. We can't be afraid. We must do this."

Maine

Bangor Daily News (Editorial): Impeachment is political, but senators must still strive to be impartial

By Editorial Board

The U.S. House of Representatives has voted to impeach President Donald Trump, and now it's the U.S. Senate's constitutional role to conduct an impeachment trial and determine whether or not to convict him and remove him from office. Much has been made, and for good reason, about the oath senators will take as part of the trial, affirming their commitment to doing "impartial justice" in the process. Both Sens. Susan Collins and Angus King have made reference to that oath in recent weeks. "It is inappropriate, in my judgment, for senators on either side of the aisle to prejudge the evidence before they have heard what is presented to us, because each of us will take an oath, an oath that I take very seriously to render impartial justice," Collins told Maine Public this week when asked about Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's discouraging comments in December that he would work in "total coordination" with the White House on impeachment.

Press Herald: Health care, corrections, broadband at top of state legislative agenda

By Scott Thistle

The Maine Legislature cranks back into gear when it convenes the second session of the biennium on Wednesday, with a focus on several key issues, including health care, corrections, broadband access and climate change. Lawmakers are poised to start their work on solid financial ground, with an estimated state budget surplus of close to \$120 million based on the last revenue forecast in November. Some of the Mills administration's top environmental priorities during the 2020 session are expected to focus on a class of chemicals, known as PFAS. "I think we are going to be absolutely looking at how we can bring people together, start with a clean slate and good conversations about what we invest in," said House Speaker Sara Gideon, D-Freeport. Any new spending or taxation would likely come in the form of a supplemental budget bill that would have to be offered first by Democratic Gov. Janet Mills. Mills, like Gideon, said state government accomplished a lot in 2019 under Democratic leadership, but there was still much work to be done.

NewsCenterMaine: Political Brew: Collins on impeachment, grades for Mills, and a deadly strike

By Pat Callaghan

Sen. Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has yet to set rules for an impeachment trial for President Trump. One of the members of his party, Maine Sen. Susan Collins, made it clear this past week that she wants to ensure a fair process. She told NEWS CENTER Maine "Each of us has to take an oath where we swear to render

impartial justice. I don't see how you can be faithful to that oath if you've already prejudged the outcome of the trial, as many senators regrettably, on both sides of the aisle, have done." Our political analysts say Collins can have a say in how the process unfolds, particularly if a few other Republican senators join her. Republican Phil Harriman says Collins "has a fair amount of influence to say 'I want to see more witnesses, I want additional information, whatever it may be that would lead to a fair outcome.'"

NYTimes: With Split Decision on Impeachment, Maine Democrat Risks a Dual Backlash

By Catie Edmondson

Standing on the House floor minutes after voting to impeach President Trump, Representative Jared Golden replayed in his head the criticism streaming through his office phone lines and inbox. Then he did exactly what those voters had warned against: He broke with his own party and voted against a second article of impeachment. In doing so, Mr. Golden, a Maine Democrat, became the only member of the House to split his decision on a historic matter with grave implications for the president and the nation's political landscape. His unusual choice to charge Mr. Trump with abuse of power but not with obstruction of Congress has left Mr. Golden open to a backlash from Republicans and independents who oppose impeaching the president and Democrats who are determined that he should be removed at all costs.

AP: Maine US Senate candidate speaks out about tenure at Google

By Staff

The U.S. Senate candidate vying for the seat held by Republican Susan Collins has spoken out about the human-rights concerns he had while serving as an executive at Google. Ross LaJeunesse, a Biddeford Democrat, decided to speak out about his experience at the technology giant because of the trust people put into companies like Google, the Bangor Daily News reported Thursday. "I started seeing it, honestly, as a form of corruption and an abuse of power," he said. The U.S. Senate hopeful spoke to The Washington Post for the first time on Thursday about his lobbying for a human rights program at the company for two years. LaJeunesse, the former adviser to former California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, made the jump to join the race for the U.S. Senate seat held by Collins in November. He set up a four-way Democratic primary for the right to face the longtime Maine senator.

Massachusetts

Boston Globe: Kennedy outpaced Markey in Senate fund-raising race in final months of 2019

By Victoria McGrane

Representative Joseph P. Kennedy III raised more than \$2.4 million over the last three months of 2019, outpacing incumbent Senator Edward J. Markey by about \$1 million, according to preliminary numbers shared with the Globe by the Senate candidates' campaigns. Markey's campaign said he raised more than \$1.4 million in the final quarter of 2019, a total that represents the Malden Democrat's best quarterly haul to date and a 30 percent increase from the prior three-month period. Yet the top-line numbers indicate Markey — at least so far — hasn't been able to match Kennedy, his chief Democratic challenger, when it comes to the crucial competition for cash. Kennedy's larger total shows he has carried his national fund-raising prowess into the high-profile primary match against the incumbent, and that the contest has the potential to be among the most expensive congressional primary races in the country.

Michigan

WKAR: The Looming Battle For Michigan's Senate Seat

By Abigail Kensky

When Donald Trump won the state of Michigan in 2016, he did it by a narrow margin of just over 11,000 votes. The President's victory in 2020 depends on voters in a coalition of battleground states, like Michigan, voting for him again. While the top of the ticket race may be the marquee for politicians, it's not the only one. The reelection effort for Michigan's junior Democratic Senator, Gary Peters, will be hard fought between Democrats, who need the seat to maintain their foothold in the Senate, and Republicans, who place Peters at the top of their "endangered" list. Peters, who was elected in 2015, is one of two Democratic Senators up for reelection in a state that Trump won in 2016. The other is Alabama Senator Doug Jones.

By Kayla Clarke

Michigan Sen. Gary Peters spoke with Local 4 on Friday. The conversation comes after the United States killed Iran's top general in an airstrike at Baghdad's international airport. Peters said that as we start seeing an escalation of attacks there will likely be retaliatory action. He said he hopes the administration has been thinking several moves forward and has a long-term strategy. He believes there needs to be a plan, as things move forward, to deescalate the tensions. U.S. officials have cited an imminent threat as the reason President Donald Trump ordered the killing of top Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani, the head of Iran's elite Quds Force. Peters doesn't expect to be briefed on the imminent threat until he can get back to Washington D.C. and into a confidential setting. He hopes for answers next week.

Michigan Radio: Senator Gary Peters officially on the 2020 ballot

By Bryce Huffman

Democratic U.S. Senator Gary Peters has collected enough signatures to be on the 2020 ballot. The Senator Peters campaign collected and submitted more than 24,000 signatures, which puts Peters on the ballot for re-election. The Peters campaign says it collected signatures from all 83 counties in Michigan. As well as each State House and State Senate district. Peters released a statement thanking the hundreds of volunteers around the state who helped the campaign. Here is Peters' full statement:

Mississippi

Clarion Ledger: U.S. Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith announces reelection effort, will face Mike Espy in November

By Luke Ramseth

U.S. Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith launched her reelection campaign on Friday flanked by top Republican officials in Jackson, kicking off what is expected to be another hotly contested race against Democratic former U.S. Rep. Mike Espy. "I didn't ever think I would be here, but I am here," Hyde-Smith, 60, said of her rise to senator. She announced her candidacy and signed paperwork at the Mississippi GOP headquarters, surrounded by several state officials — including Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann, House Speaker Philip Gunn and former Gov. Haley Barbour — as well as her colleague U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker.

New Hampshire

WMUR: NH Primary Source: State Democratic Party to hold major pre-primary fundraising dinner at SNHU Arena

By John DiStaso

SHAHEEN-McINTYRE 100 CLUB EXTRAVAGANZA. About a dozen presidential candidates and potentially thousands of political activists and interested Granite State voters will rally at a major New Hampshire Democratic Party fundraising event Feb. 8 at the SNHU Arena in downtown Manchester. NHDP Chair Raymond Buckley announced Friday the presidential candidates have been invited to speak at the 61st annual Shaheen-McIntyre 100 Club Dinner just three days before the first-in-the-nation primary and the night after a nationally televised debate, co-hosted by WMUR, is held at Saint Anselm College. The longtime party leader said he expects a sellout crowd at the arena, which seats nearly 12,000 people.

Union Leader: Shaheen: Iranian general killed by Trump was terrorist responsible for deaths of U.S. servicemen

By Kevin Landrigan

U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, called on President Donald Trump Friday to produce the intelligence behind the daring assassination of Iranian Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani at Baghdad International Airport. Shaheen, D-N.H., said all Americans need to know Soleimani was a murderous "terrorist" responsible for the deaths of many U.S. and allied servicemen and women.

NHPR: Shaheen: 'War With Iran Is Not in Our Nation's Best Interest'

By Alex Mcowen & Peter Biello

New Hampshire Senator Jeanne Shaheen called last night's US air strike that killed Iran's top general Qassem Soleimani a "significant escalation." She said the US needs a strategic plan in place that prepares for any potential response from Iran, and that the plan needs to be clear. "Mixed messages lead to the potential for miscalculations that can lead to further escalation and war," she says. "That is not what we want to see here." Shaheen said the US should take a broad approach to the situation in Iran, one that combines diplomatic efforts and cooperation with allies, and does not rely solely on military action. She believes a war with Iran would not be in the nation's best interest.

New Mexico

North Carolina

Triad City Beat: Tillis: Criticism of Trump's strike against Soleimani is 'reckless'; Democratic candidates' responses range from concern to condemnation

By Jordan Green

Sen. Thom Tillis, the Republican senator seeking re-election in North Carolina, issued a bellicose endorsement of President Trump's lethal strike against Iranian General Qasem Soleimani in appearances on Fox News and former Gov. Pat McCrory's radio show on Friday. Tillis' Democratic opponents for the US Senate seat have issued statements expressing concern, while largely withholding judgment. Reactions from Democratic candidates for the open 6th Congressional District seat in the Triad ranged from condemnation to concern, with varying degrees of emphasis in also denouncing the Iranian general and intelligence chief. "The Iranian government needs to understand at some point we have to say, 'Enough is enough,'" Tillis said on Fox News on Friday, commenting on a targeted killing that is widely viewed around the world as an escalation of the United States' conflict with Iran.

South Carolina

The State: Looking past outcome, Booker pledges he'll return to help SC Democrats win in 2020

By Maayan Schechter

Beaufort resident Diane Schmid is all in for Cory Booker. A New Jersey native, Schmid told The State on Saturday that the U.S. senator from her home state is the "real deal" and she plans to cast her Feb. 29 Democratic presidential primary vote for the former Newark mayor regardless of how well he's polling in the 2020 race. "He is my guy," said Schmid, 75, while watching Booker take selfies with voters at the Colleton Civic Center in Walterboro on Saturday. Still, Schmid said she doesn't think Booker's chances look good.

NBC News: Graham threatens to 'take matters in our own hands' if Pelosi doesn't send articles of impeachment to Senate

By Allan Smith

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said Sunday that if the House doesn't submit articles of impeachment against President Donald Trump to the Senate this week, he will seek to change the impeachment rules so the Senate can proceed to a trial without them. Speaking on Fox News' "Sunday Morning Futures," Graham said: "If we don't get the articles this week, then we need to take matters in our own hands and change the rules." "Deem them to be delivered to the Senate," he continued, adding, "My goal is to start this trial in the next coming days, not let [House Speaker] Nancy Pelosi take over the Senate."

Texas

Texas Tribune: Analysis: Texas elections aren't starting now — they're already running at full speed

By Ross Ramsey

A bunch of Texas politicians will soon find out they are not destined for elected office. Not this time, anyway. The Democratic and Republican primaries, the first round of the 2020 election cycle, loom. Early voting starts in just six weeks, on Feb. 18. Election day for the primaries is two weeks after that. Dozens of candidates will

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learn sometime after sundown March 3 that this is not their year. Some of this year's primary races are absurdly crowded. It starts at the top, with all of those Democrats in the hunt for the presidential nomination. In the next race, a dozen Democrats are competing to face U.S. Sen. [John Cornyn](#) in November.

KXAN: [Republican Mark Yancey challenges John Cornyn in Senate primary](#)

By John Thomas

Sen. John Cornyn has support from President Donald Trump and the Republican Party establishment. He's the clear favorite in the March primary. But he still faces challengers for the nomination. Dallas businessman Mark Yancey is one of four Republicans challenging Cornyn for the nomination. Yancey has spent 33 years in the private sector and says his business perspective would make him a good leader in Washington. "I've created hundreds of well-paying jobs," Yancey said. "I want to take that same concept to Washington." Yancey has no experience in government. He sees that as a good thing, saying the current system in Washington is broken.

The Texan: [20 Texas Congressional Members Call for Supreme Court Overrule of Roe v. Wade](#)

By Daniel Friend

On Thursday, 207 members of Congress — including both Texas senators and 18 Texas members in the House of Representatives — filed [an amicus brief](#) in *June Medical Services LLC v. Gee* calling for the Supreme Court to consider overturning *Roe v. Wade*. Last year, Louisiana passed Act 620, requiring every physician performing abortions to "have active admitting privileges at a hospital that is located not further than thirty miles from the location at which the abortion is performed or induced." A clinic at the center of the case is located in Shreveport, and the possibility of its closing caused concern among some that a new facility might be opened up just miles away in Texas — prompting the city of Waskom [to pass an ordinance](#) declaring itself a "sanctuary for the unborn." Opponents of the law contend that it creates an "undue burden" on abortion facilities and should be ruled as unconstitutional.

Statesman: [Texas lawmakers react to US killing of top Iran general](#)

By Nicole Cobler

... A spokesman for U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said he supports Trump's decision and will address it Monday. U.S. Rep. Michael Cloud, R-Victoria, declined to comment. U.S. Rep. Bill Flores, R-Bryan, did not return a request for comment.

Texas Observer: [Questions About Politics in 2020 That Aren't 'Will Texas Turn Blue?'](#)

By Justin Miller

As we head into 2020, brace yourself for an onslaught of headlines from national media posing a [reductive question](#): "Will Texas Turn Blue?" It's become something of a biannual assignment for political commentators. Yes, 2020 could very likely be a banner election cycle for Texas Democrats. The political future of the state is on the line for perhaps the first time this century. Democrats are charged up, brimming with grassroots activism, and eager to build on the progress made by Beto O'Rourke's near-win and the substantial down-ballot gains that came with it. The possibility of a once-in-a-generation political realignment—fueled by a surge of young and diverse voters and a breakdown of the GOP's suburban red wall—is, indeed, very real. But be wary of those who pontificate on the political hue of Texas. Focusing on the question of whether Trump—and similarly, U.S. [Senator John Cornyn](#)—could lose here just obscures the many other potential sea changes that are just as consequential to the future of Lone Star politics, if not more so.

From: Regina Anderson[O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=4217779680EC452AAB64F6342D954BC0-REGINA.ANDE]
Sent: Wed 12/18/2019 7:45:40 AM (UTC-06:00)
Subject: DSCC Morning Clips—December 18, 2019

DSCC MORNING CLIPS—DECEMBER 18, 2019

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National**Politico:** Schumer weaponizes impeachment trial debate

By Burgess Everett & Marianne Levine

Chuck Schumer is working carefully to get buy-in from the entire Senate Democratic Caucus for his gambit to line up Trump administration officials for the president's impeachment trial, hoping unity among Democrats could lead to surprising results on the Senate floor. Schumer said in an interview Tuesday there has been "no dissension" in his 47-member caucus, giving him an outside shot at getting vulnerable and independent-minded Republicans to back his plan to bring the acting White House chief of staff to testify. Schumer's calling card during his three years as minority leader has been unity: No defections on Obamacare repeal or tax cuts, just a handful on Supreme Court nominees and little party infighting compared to the Republicans and President Donald Trump. He emphasized that he discussed his plan during party meetings to drive a hard bargain with Majority Leader Mitch McConnell over the parameters of an impeachment trial.

NYTimes: Republicans Attack House Democrats on Impeachment, and Democrats Change the Subject

By Nick Corasaniti

For the past two months, television ads across central Virginia have sounded a lot like President Trump's Twitter feed. "A rigged process. A sham impeachment. No quid pro quo. But Pelosi's witch hunt continues," an ad from the Republican nonprofit group America First Policies cried, as images of Abigail Spanberger, who represents the region in Congress, flickered onscreen. Like many of her fellow freshmen Democratic colleagues, Ms. Spanberger has faced a barrage of attack ads from the Republican National Committee, nonprofit groups and super PACs aligned with President Trump. During the roughly two months that the impeachment inquiry has been underway, Mr. Trump and his Republican allies have flooded the airwaves, spending more than \$16.7 million on ads critical of the impeachment effort. A vast majority of those ads attack House Democrats rather than defend the president, according to Advertising Analytics, an ad tracking firm.

Washington Post: Impeachment has commanded widespread attention. The political impact may be more muted.

By Michael Scherer

As Democratic members of Congress spoke in somber tones this week to announce their support for impeaching President Trump, top officials at the Republican National Committee dispatched provocateurs to jeer and heckle them in their home districts. The resulting clashes — from Michigan to New Mexico to Florida — earned the GOP some viral moments, but were limited to a couple dozen districts across the nation, making the potential impact more muted than it might have appeared. Partisan divisions are so ingrained at this point that the political battle for impeachment has been playing out in just a few places for the attention of a narrow subset of voters — people who had supported President Trump in 2016 and then a Democrat for Congress two years later.

The Hill: Toxic McConnell-Schumer relationship strains impeachment talks

By Alexander Bolton

The toxic relationship between Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) has left senators pessimistic about reaching a deal to set the rules of President Trump's impeachment trial. The leaders already have scars from the battles over Brett Kavanaugh's nomination to the Supreme Court in 2018, efforts to repeal ObamaCare in 2017 and McConnell's refusal to hold a vote on former President Obama's nomination of Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court in 2016, among other controversies. So perhaps it should not be surprising that talks on rules for the trial are off to a rocky start. "The problem is the core of the relationship between him and Schumer," said one Republican senator close to McConnell. "Their history is bad."

Reuters: On eve of expected impeachment, Trump lashes out at Pelosi, Democrats

By David Morgan & Susan Cornwell

On the eve of his expected impeachment in the U.S. House of Representatives, President Donald Trump accused Democrats of pursuing an "illegal, partisan attempted coup" and declaring war on American democracy as they seek to remove him from office for pressing Ukraine to investigate political rival Joe Biden.

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Trump's remarks came in a signed letter addressed to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, released as House lawmakers set the rules for debate ahead of Wednesday's planned vote on two articles of impeachment - formal charges - against the Republican president. At the same time, the Senate's top Republican, Mitch McConnell, signaled he would not allow the expected upcoming Senate trial on impeachment charges to involve more factfinding about Trump's conduct. The Republican-led Senate is unlikely to vote to convict the president.

NYTimes: [House Approves Spending Measures to Avert Government Shutdown](#)

By Emily Cochrane

The House took the first step on Tuesday to avert a government shutdown, giving overwhelming approval to legislation that would fund all federal agencies and programs through next fall just days before federal funding is set to lapse. A dozen must-pass bills were split into two packages in part to appease President Trump, who had vowed to never again sign a so-called omnibus package. But in essence, the pair of measures were just that: a giant potpourri of unrelated spending and policy measures stuffed full of priorities with enough appeal to each political party to ensure their passage through Congress and smooth their path to Mr. Trump's desk, on the [eve of a vote to impeach him](#). The House passed the measures less than 24 hours after lawmakers formally unveiled more than 2,000 pages of legislation, which cover the federal government for the current fiscal year. The Senate is expected to vote on both measures before the Friday deadline when funding expires.

Washington Post (Opinion): [How to run against Republican toadies and flip the Senate](#)

By Jennifer Rubin

Unless a few daring Republican senators step forward to save their party from the abject toadiness of Majority Leader Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and demand a real impeachment trial — with witnesses, evidence and everything! — Democrats will have one more lethal argument in 2020 against Republican incumbent Sens. Joni Ernst of Iowa, Susan Collins of Maine, Cory Gardner of Colorado, Martha McSally of Arizona, Thom Tillis of North Carolina and others on the ballot. In refusing to criticize a president who has, in the eyes of a [majority](#) of the country, put his personal issues above national security and obstructed a constitutionally authorized investigation (not to mention, revealed himself in [his letter](#) to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) yet again to be unhinged and divorced from reality), Republican go-alongers raise the important question: *What good are they doing?* We already knew that Republicans have one response to every policy issue: *What does Trump want?* Trump wanted Brett M. Kavanaugh confirmed as Supreme Court justice and a tax bill that benefited the rich and corporations as he unleashed a gusher of red ink.

HuffPost: [Fighting Corruption Is The Most Electable Thing A Democrat Can Do In 2020](#)

By Kevin Robillard

Over the past year, every member of the often-ballooning and occasionally shrinking field of Democratic presidential candidates has tried to convince an uncommitted and nervous electorate that they are the candidate to defeat President [Donald Trump](#). Every candidate has their own theory of how to effectively oust the incumbent. Former Vice President [Joe Biden](#) has argued that his career credentials and familiarity with a broad swath of voters put him in the best position to trounce Trump. Vermont Sen. [Bernie Sanders](#) has said that proposing bold liberal policies will inspire unprecedented turnout and win over [Democrats](#) who backed Trump in 2016. Before she dropped out, California Sen. [Kamala Harris](#) had posited that the key to defeating the president was firing up disengaged African-American voters in swing states.

Talking Points Memo: [Dem Senators Tell GOP Chairmen To Put Up Or Shut Up About Ukraine](#)

By Josh Kovensky

Republicans are facilitating “foreign interference” in the 2020 election by probing “discredited” allegations of Ukrainian involvement in the 2016 election, three Democratic Senators wrote in a Tuesday letter. The message — addressed to Sens. Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Ron Johnson (R-WI), and Charles Grassley (R-IA) — accuses the Senators of embarking on an investigation that “could advance the Russian disinformation and election interference efforts.” The letter was sent from the ranking members of the Senate Judiciary, Homeland Security, and Finance Committees to their respective chairs. Johnson and Grassley have [opened an investigation](#) into unsubstantiated allegations that the Ukrainian government interfered in the 2016 election. The probe appears to focus on — and mirror the claims of — [Andrii Telizhenko](#), a former staffer at Ukraine's embassy in Washington in 2016 who says he bore witness to an effort at collusion by the

Wall Street Journal: Congress Orders Probe of Satellite Loophole China Exploited

By Brian Spegele & Kate O'Keefe

Congress ordered the Commerce Department to examine a loophole in federal law that has allowed China's government to use U.S.-built satellites to support its police and military, following an investigation by The Wall Street Journal. The National Defense Authorization Act—a defense-policy bill passed Tuesday by the Senate and earlier by the House—instructs the Commerce Department to investigate the national-security implications of the current system and make recommendations on potential new export rules to prevent China from using U.S. satellites. The U.S. effectively bars China from buying U.S. satellites outright. But a Journal article April detailed how Chinese companies, backed by their government, devised a workaround in which offshore firms legally purchased U.S. satellites, then leased their bandwidth to mainland Chinese entities.

State**Alabama****AL.com: Doug Jones' 'military widow tax' repeal provision passes Senate**

By Howard Koplowitz

After 18 years of attempts, the Senate on Tuesday approved a provision in a defense policy bill championed by Sen. Doug Jones that would end the so-called "military widow's tax," which has presented military spouses from getting the full benefits they are entitled to. The tax affects some 67,000 military spouses, including more than 2,000 in Alabama. Military widows paid out under one benefit plan have had those payments offset by another plan, but the provision in the defense policy bill passed Friday would do away with the offset. Jones, a Democrat, partnered with Republican Susan Collins of Maine on the Widow's Tax Elimination Act of 2019, which ultimately became a provision of the National Defense Authorization Act. The bill will head to President Trump's desk to be signed into law.

Arizona**Arizona Republic: Sen. Martha McSally unloads on House Democrats for overreaching in Trump impeachment**

By Yvonne Wingett Sanchez

When news cameras are pointing her way, Sen. Martha McSally, R-Ariz., is circumspect in her assessment of the Senate's expected impeachment trial of President Donald Trump. But away from the glare of Washington on Saturday, McSally was explicit about this moment while talking to a Republican group northwest of Tucson. She talked about "how to stick it to these guys for overreaching," suggesting any trial in the Senate may be little more than an act of political vengeance by Democrats. As recently as last week, McSally had taken the position publicly that the people of Arizona want Congress to "take it seriously and not have pure partisan motives." She has clung to such bland seriousness as pressure has mounted on her to take a stand on Trump's dealings with Ukraine ahead of her own 2020 election. McSally has repeatedly sidestepped questions as to whether Trump acted appropriately by asking foreign powers to interfere in a U.S. election by encouraging them to investigate Democratic rival Joe Biden and his son Hunter.

Arizona Republic: Trump impeachment rally draws hundreds outside Phoenix office of McSally

By Angel Mendoza

Hundreds rallied near the office of Sen. Martha McSally on Tuesday as part of a national movement to call for President Donald Trump's impeachment and removal from office. Demonstrators chanted calls for Trump to leave office amid bass drum beats and a constant chorus of car horns blaring in response to multiple protest signs reading "Honk for impeachment." The normally busy yet quiet intersection near Biltmore Fashion Park turned into a chaotic scene as the night went on, with officers guiding traffic from all directions. Some came with signs, megaphones, and balloons — one man in a group of a couple dozen counter-protesters held up a massive Trump 2020 flag. "There were literally 600 rallies like this around the country — it's a clear indication that the people are really tired of this president," said Dan O' Neal, a coordinator with Progressive Democrats for America.

Gazette: EDITORIAL: Gardner delivers results, just before the holidays

By Editorial Board

Sources expect President Donald Trump to sign the National Defense Authorization Act on Wednesday, or later this week, creating a historical moment that.....

Colorado Politics: Colorado U.S. Senate candidate Andrew Romanoff draws cheers, jeers for nightmarish climate change ad

By Ernest Luning

Democratic U.S. Senate candidate Andrew Romanoff is getting plenty of attention for a dark campaign ad that begins with a nightmarish depiction of a Colorado Springs family coping with the effects of climate change. Set in what the ad describes as "the not so distant future," the apocalyptic introduction is narrated by a young girl as murky figures in hazmat suits move about a bunker and tune in the weather on a radio. "What I miss most is the sunshine," the girl says. "But we've been here for a really long time now." Between bursts of static, a voice says the temperature is 127 degrees Fahrenheit with a chance of "large-scale" tornadoes.

Colorado Independent: Littwin: Romanoff asks which is scarier — his climate-change video or a changing-climate future?

By Mike Littwin

If you haven't seen Andrew Romanoff's new apocalyptic climate video, take a few minutes — four, actually — and hold on. [Here it is](#). Assuming you survived the experience, we can now proceed, although you may need a few moments to either catch your breath or pick your jaw up from the floor. Or both. The video begins sometime in the near future — we're told — with a family hunkered down in a Colorado Springs bunker. It's 127 degrees outside. Tornadoes are raging overhead. Dad has the haz-mat suit on while trying to repair the foil roof. Mom is expecting to bring another child into the dystopian world and the little daughter is saying what she misses most is seeing the sunshine. What I guess Romanoff is saying is if you're not depressed enough by the state of the world, you can listen to his narration crackling over the wireless in the bunker: "This is not the stuff of fiction or some far-off threat. This is a clear and present danger to life on Earth."

Coloradoan: Fort Collins rally calls for President Donald Trump's impeachment

By Brooklyn Dance

Hundreds gathered outside Sen. Cory Gardner's Fort Collins office Tuesday to rally for President Trump's impeachment on the eve of the House vote. [VIDEO]

Washington Times: Colorado Senate hopeful takes heat for 'insane' climate-apocalypse ad

By Valerie Richardson

Politicians often make it sound as if the world will end unless they're elected, but Democratic Senate candidate [Andrew Romanoff](#) may be taking it literally. Mr. [Romanoff](#) has come under fire for "fear-mongering" over his apocalyptic Senate ad that envisions temperatures of 127 degrees Fahrenheit — in Colorado Springs, where the mercury rarely reaches 100. "The #ClimateCrisis poses a threat unlike any in human history. It's a catastrophe of our own creation — but it doesn't have to end this way," said Mr. [Romanoff](#) on Facebook. "We can choose a different path. The four-minute video posted Monday begins with a girl saying 'I miss the sun' as she and her family hole up in a bunker lined with tin foil to hide from 127-degree heat in a location identified as Colorado Springs 'in the not too distant future.'"

Georgia**Atlanta Journal Constitution:** Loeffler distances herself from her WNBA team's 'religious liberty' opposition

By Greg Bluestein

Republican Kelly Loeffler is at once a "[pro-wall and pro-Trump](#)" U.S. senator in waiting and the co-owner of an Atlanta WNBA franchise that condemned a top priority of some conservative leaders. The Atlanta Dream, which Loeffler helped [purchase](#) in 2011, was among dozens of businesses that [opposed](#) "religious liberty" legislation in 2016 before the start of that year's legislative session. In an [interview](#) with The Atlanta Journal-

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Constitution, Loeffler said the team's position on issues should not be misconstrued with her own. "I bought the Atlanta Dream because I love basketball. I wanted to do something for the city of Atlanta, for the Southeast, for sports. I did not buy the team for political purposes or political statements," she said. "I believe that people of faith should be free to make statements without fear of persecution."

11 Alive: Protesters pushing for Trump to be impeached demonstrate outside Sen. David Perdue's Atlanta office

By Donesha Aldridge

Protesters who want President Donald Trump to be impeached held a demonstration Tuesday night to have their message heard. They held a rally outside of Sen. David Perdue's office in Atlanta. The crowd stood together with signs hoping to raise support of the impeachment process. Organizers said this rally was a part of the "Nobody is Above the law" events that took place simultaneously at 5:30 p.m. nationwide. "We knew that Georgians would want to raise their voices in support of impeachment, so we put the word out that we would host this event in Atlanta," said Janel Green, Executive Director of Georgia Alliance for Social Justice, in a news release.

Iowa

Des Moines Register: Previewing possible 2020 campaign message, Joni Ernst highlights her accomplishments in D.C.

By Brianne Pfannenstiel

U.S. Sen. Joni Ernst is highlighting her work on ethanol, flood mitigation and domestic violence as Congress nears adjournment for its holiday recess, previewing some of the issues she is likely to run on during her re-election bid in 2020. In a recent interview with the Des Moines Register, Ernst, a Republican, said she is proud of the groundbreaking for a flood prevention project in Cedar Rapids in October — a long-awaited milestone following the city's decade-long effort to secure federal funding following flooding in 2008. The city was awarded \$117 million in federal funds in 2018. "It just made it real, I guess, seeing the work actually get started," Ernst said. "Oftentimes, we pass this bill or that bill, but we don't actually see the tangible results on the ground. So I was really proud of that and was so glad to be there."

Kentucky

Kentucky New Era: Rep. Charles Booker makes stop on listening tour in Hopkinsville Freshman representative wants to build a movement

By Zirconia Alleyne

State Rep. Charles Booker met with media in Hopkinsville on Tuesday to discuss his potential run for the U.S. Senate in 2020 and why he wants the chance to unseat Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. Booker, an African-American Democrat from the west end of Louisville, said he was inspired to run in the upcoming national election after he realized McConnell controls so much of what happens in Frankfort. "If we need to change things, then he's got to go," Booker said. "It's not about a title for me, it's not about political office; I don't care about politics ... but if they're making decisions about us, we've got to be there." Booker, 35, began representing the 43rd District in the state House of Representatives in January and recently formed an exploratory committee to determine if a successful run against McConnell for the U.S. Senate is possible. Since then, Booker has been traveling across the state on a listening tour, meeting with citizens and media outlets. "I believe that this is a moment that we can take a stand, not just to get rid of McConnell, but really it's about taking our future back," Booker said.

Kansas

Washington Examiner: McConnell selling Pompeo on Senate as perfect platform for 2024 White House run

By David M. Drucker

When Mitch McConnell pitches Mike Pompeo on running for the Senate in 2020, a periodic occurrence, the majority leader does not fail to mention that the chamber is a great steppingstone should the secretary of state harbor higher aspirations. Fearing former Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach could win the Republican nomination to succeed retiring Sen. Pat Roberts and put an otherwise red seat in jeopardy, McConnell and

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other party insiders are desperate for Pompeo to run. But concern about the politically divisive Kobach aside, Republican strategists tend to agree that running for Senate is the better play for Pompeo if his White House ambitions are real, especially if President Trump loses reelection. For Pompeo, a Senate seat would help him stay relevant heading into the 2024 presidential campaign. He would be in demand for TV and conservative talk radio appearances, allowing him to cultivate grassroots enthusiasm and internet fundraising. "It keeps him in front of the public," said David McIntosh, a Republican former congressman who runs the Club for Growth, a conservative group encouraging Pompeo to run for Senate.

Maine

WABI: Maine Democrats, Gideon react to Collins re-election bid

By News Desk

Both the Maine Democratic Party and Democratic Senate hopeful Sara Gideon reacted to the news that Susan Collins would seek a 5th term in the U.S. Senate Wednesday morning. Gideon's full statement. "When Senator Collins took office 22 years ago, she might have been different from other people in Washington, but it doesn't seem that way anymore. These days, Senator Collins seems more focused on serving the special interests that fund her campaigns than the Mainers who elected her. Whether it's failing to reduce the cost of prescription drugs, giving away trillions in tax cuts to corporations and the wealthy, or repeatedly putting health care coverage and protections for seniors and people with pre-existing conditions at risk, in Washington, Susan Collins has put special interests before the Mainers who elected her. "We deserve to have someone fighting for Maine families in the Senate. That's who I'll always put first." Maine Democratic Party Chair Katleen Marra issued the following statement:

WABI: Maine Sen. Susan Collins says she is running for 5th term in office

By News Desk

Maine Sen. Susan Collins is running for a fifth term in Washington. The Republican made the announcement Wednesday morning in an email to supporters. Collins, 67, was first elected to the Senate in 1996 when she replaced William Cohen, another moderate Republican. For weeks, Collins has promised to announce a decision about her campaign this fall. Winter doesn't officially start until Saturday. Even though she hadn't officially announced a re-election campaign until now, she has been raising money. As of Sept. 30, she had banked \$7 million in campaign cash, a record for Maine. She will face a challenger in the general election. State House Speaker Sara Gideon and 2018 gubernatorial candidate Betsy Sweet are both running for the Democratic nomination. National Democrats have made Collins' seat a top target for the 2020 elections. Collins won a fourth term in the Senate in 2014, winning 67% of the vote. Collins has been a critic of President Donald Trump, often calling his comments inappropriate.

News Center Maine: Rallies supporting impeachment to take place across Maine, nation

By Chloe Teboe

Hundreds of rallies are expected to take place around the nation Tuesday in favor of the impeachment of President Donald Trump. The "Nobody is Above the Law" rallies are organized in every U.S. state and Washington D.C., totaling more than 500 actions. In Maine, there are at least three rally sites, including Portland, Bangor, and Auburn. Those participating in the rally will essentially be asking their state representatives to support House impeachment and Senate removal. The rally comes at a particularly contentious time in Maine, as neither Senator Susan Collins nor Representative Jared Golden have yet stated where they stand on this issue. According to the online event listing, more than 100 people have already signed up for the event happening at the Peirce Memorial Park in Bangor. Throughout the past week, people both for and against the President's impeachment have protested outside of Golden's office in the Queen City.

AP: GOP Sen. Collins of Maine launches reelection bid

By David Sharp

Republican Sen. Susan Collins officially launched her bid for reelection Wednesday, setting up an expensive and closely watched battle that's starting against the backdrop of impeachment proceedings against President Donald Trump. Collins made her formal announcement in an email to supporters, saying her "bipartisan commonsense approach" has been key to many legislative successes and will be important in an era of bitter partisanship. "The fundamental question I had to ask myself in making my decision was this: In today's

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polarized political environment, is there still a role for a centrist who believes in getting things done through compromise, collegiality, and bipartisanship? I have concluded that the answer to this question is 'yes' and I will, therefore, seek the honor of continuing to serve as Maine's United States senator."

Politico: Susan Collins will run for reelection in Maine

By James Arkin

Maine Sen. Susan Collins announced Wednesday she intends to run for reelection, seeking a fifth term in what will likely be the most difficult campaign of her career. Collins has been raising money and running TV ads as if she was running for reelection for months, but delayed any official announcement, creating widespread speculation about her intentions. In a letter to supporters Wednesday, she made her plans clear. "The fundamental question I had to ask myself in making my decision was this: in today's polarized political environment, is there still a role for a centrist who believes in getting things done through compromise, collegiality, and bipartisanship?" Collins said in the letter. "I have concluded that the answer to this question is 'yes,' and I will, therefore, seek the honor of continuing to serve as Maine's United States Senator."

The Hill: Collins announces Senate reelection bid

By Tal Axelrod

Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) announced Wednesday morning that she intends to seek reelection, officially sparking what is expected to be one of the most competitive Senate races in the 2020 cycle. In a letter to supporters, Collins said her brand of moderation still has a place in today's "polarized political environment" and touted her record of bipartisanship as she seeks to win a fifth term in the purple Pine Tree State. "I promised the people of Maine a decision this fall on whether I would seek reelection. The fundamental question I had to ask myself in making my decision was this: in today's polarized political environment, is there still a role for a centrist who believes in getting things done through compromise, collegiality, and bipartisanship?" Collins wrote.

Axios: Susan Collins announces 2020 re-election bid

By Jacob Knutson

Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) announced Wednesday that she'll seek re-election for a fifth term in 2020, AP reports.

Why it matters: The campaign is projected to be one of the most expensive races in Maine history, as Democrats believe the centrist's seat is vulnerable.

- She said in an email to supporters that her "bipartisan commonsense approach" will be necessary in an era of bitter partisanship.
- Collins also faces a dramatic decision in the coming weeks on whether to vote to convict President Trump in a potential impeachment trial in the Senate.

What she's saying: Collins did not hint at how she might vote in her announcement email, but she did acknowledge the nation's divisive politics.

- "To say that these are difficult and contentious times is most certainly an understatement. But our country has confronted much more challenging times in our history."
- "The fundamental question I had to ask myself in making my decision was this: In today's polarized political environment, is there still a role for a centrist who believes in getting things done through compromise, collegiality, and bipartisanship? I have concluded that the answer to this question is 'yes.'"

Michigan

New Hampshire

New Mexico

ABC 11: 'Impeach and remove!': Hundreds march in Raleigh ahead of historic House vote

By Joel Brown

On this night before a historic vote on impeachment -- hundreds marched from Raleigh's Bicentennial Plaza around the Capitol and back again. They shouted "Impeach and remove! Impeach and remove!" along the way. And when they weren't chanting, they were singing. "We wish you a good impeachment, we wish you a good impeachment and removal right now," they sung in the melody of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." Raleigh resident John Constance paused during the march to tell us, "I think if people look at the facts, there's no question that this president has violated his oath of office." Toya Brown drove from Clayton to take part, telling us, "It's our country. We the people, for the people, by the people. And we just have to let our representative know how we stand."

South Carolina**Texas****Texas Tribune: Analysis: When nobody is the best-known Texas candidate, an endorsement can be a big deal**

By Ross Ramsey

It is much easier to influence a political contest when the voters are unfamiliar with the candidates. That's why the 11 candidates in the Democratic primary for U.S. Senate were so upset that a national group tapped MJ Hegar as its favorite in the race. The Democratic Senate Campaign Committee weighed in this week, blessing Hegar as its favorite, and in the process, telling the Democratic national establishment that she should get its support. It's not enough, all by itself, to make her the winner. It's not enough to make her the frontrunner. But it puts a spotlight on one of the dozen candidates whose only hope is to get some attention, some money and then some support. It does for a political candidate what a prominent movie review does for ticket sales.

Texomas: Mark Yancey to run against Sen. Cornyn in March primary

By Staff

Mark Yancey announced that he will be running against Sen. John Cornyn for US Senator in the March primary. Yancey feels Texas is a model for economic and political success, and he would carry that model to Washington. According to a press release, Yancey calls himself a Reagan Republican, who is fiscally conservative, in favor of limited government, a strong military that embraces a "needs-based military spending metric," and supportive of strong free trade and economic development. Yancey will be holding a meet and greet Thursday from 6 to 8 p.m. The event will be held at Just About Thyme Cafe. As a veteran of the financial services industry, Yancey has helped build four successful investment management firms, which in turn, created hundreds of well-paying jobs.

From: Regina Anderson[O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=4217779680EC452AAB64F6342D954BC0-REGINA.ANDE]
Sent: Mon 12/16/2019 4:56:05 PM (UTC-06:00)
Subject: DSCC Evening Clips—December 16, 2019

DSCC EVENING CLIPS—DECEMBER 16, 2019

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[Texas Tribune: Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee endorses MJ Hegar in crowded U.S. Senate primary](#)
[Dallas Morning News: Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee backs MJ Hegar for Senate against John Cornyn](#)
[Statesman: Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee endorses MJ Hegar](#)
[Houston Chronicle: Senate Democrats endorse MJ Hegar in crowded race to challenge John Cornyn](#)
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DSCC Evening Clips—December 16, 2019

National

Washington Post: Congress finalizes \$1.3 trillion spending deal ahead of Friday shutdown deadline

By Mike DeBonis

Congressional negotiators cemented a \$1.3 trillion federal spending deal Monday, with a pay raise for federal workers, money for federal gun violence research and repeal of several taxes associated with the 2010 health care law. Congress is expected to pass the legislation this week ahead of Friday's shutdown deadline and send it to President Trump for his signature. Negotiators planned to release a text of the bill later Monday, according to three congressional aides who described the deal on the condition of anonymity to speak frankly. A high-profile conflict over border wall spending — the issue that sparked a record 35-day partial government shutdown a year ago — was resolved with a retreat to the status quo: funding remains unchanged from 2019 levels at \$1.375 billion, short of the \$8.6 billion President Trump requested from Congress. The Trump administration, however, retains the ability to transfer funds from other accounts, though the bill does not replenish the accounts it drew from earlier this year. Funding for immigration enforcement agencies also remains unchanged from 2019 levels.

The Hill: Lawmakers pile on the spending in \$1.4 trillion deal

By Niv Elis

Lawmakers added \$24.7 billion in emergency and "off-book" spending to a nearly \$1.4 trillion package as they sought to settle differences and finish the congressional appropriations bills for the fiscal year. The White House and Congress had reached a \$1.37 trillion deal in July that increased defense spending by \$22 billion and domestic spending by \$12 billion. But the final deal brings the sum total to \$1.394 trillion, and includes emergency funding for natural disasters, the 2020 census, medical funding and other priorities. "I'm pleased that we have reached a bipartisan agreement that will keep government open, provide the certainty of full-year funding, and make strong investments in key priorities for American communities," said House Appropriations Chairwoman Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.).

Axios: Inside the DNC cleanup to save the debate

By Alexi McCammond

Democratic National Committee chairman Tom Perez spent over 20 hours on the phone this weekend trying to save Thursday's debate from crumbling, per a source familiar, after a labor dispute prompted the presidential candidates to threaten a boycott.

Why it matters: The DNC already switched the venue once because of another labor dispute, and it would be nearly impossible to find a new location now.

- But internally, Democrats are hopeful a deal will be made today or tomorrow — and some DNC staffers are already heading to Los Angeles this afternoon.

The backstory: Democrats think Perez is the best positioned to get a deal done in part because he was labor secretary under Barack Obama.

- He led the weekend negotiations, calling leaders from UNITE HERE Local 11 — a labor union that represents over 32,000 hospitality workers in Southern California and Arizona — and Sodexo, the company that employs those workers and handles food service operations for LMU.
- The union is angry about "stalled contract negotiations for food service workers at LMU," per an advisory letter they sent out last week.

NYTimes: 2020 Campaigns Throw Their Hands Up on Disinformation

By Davey Alba

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In 2018, Lisa Kaplan assembled a small team inside the re-election campaign for Senator Angus King, an independent from Maine. Wary of how Russia interfered in the 2016 presidential election, it set out to find and respond to political disinformation online. The team noticed some false statements shared by voters, and traced the language back to Facebook pages with names like “Boycott The NFL 2018.” It alerted Facebook, and some pages were removed. The people behind the posts, operating from places like Israel and Nigeria, had misled the company about their identity. Today, Ms. Kaplan said, she knows of no campaigns, including among the 2020 presidential candidates, that have similar teams dedicated to spotting and pushing back on disinformation. They may “wake up the day after the election and say, ‘Oh, no, the Russians stole another one,’” she said. Less than a year before the 2020 election, false political information is moving furiously online. Facebook users shared the top 100 false political stories over 2.3 million times in the United States in the first 10 months of this year, according to Avaaz, a global human rights organization.

NYTimes: Boeing to Temporarily Shut Down 737 Max Production

By David Gelles & Natalie Kitroeff

Boeing said on Monday that it would stop making the 737 Max in January as it continues to grapple with fallout from two crashes that killed 346 people. Boeing’s decision to temporarily halt production is likely to send shocks through the American economy. It will affect suppliers around the country and plunge the company deeper into crisis. The 737 Max, which is produced in Boeing’s factory in Renton, Wash., is the company’s most important aircraft, representing tens of billions of dollars in annual sales. It has been grounded for nine months, since shortly after the second accident. With the company still unable to win approval from global regulators to let the plane fly again, executives and board members have made, in halting production, one of the most consequential decisions in the manufacturer’s more than 100-year history.

The Atlantic: The Remedy for Mitch McConnell

By Quinta Jurecic & Benjamin Wittes

Senator Lindsey Graham put it crisply. “This thing will come to the Senate, and it will die quickly, and I will do everything I can to make it die quickly,” he said. “I am trying to give a pretty clear signal I have made up my mind. I’m not trying to pretend to be a fair juror here.” Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, speaking to Fox News, was even more explicit. “Everything I do during this, I’m coordinating with White House counsel. There will be no difference between the president’s position and our position as to how to handle this to the extent that we can,” he said. “We have no choice but to take [the impeachment trial] up, but we will be working through this process, hopefully in a fairly short period of time, in total coordination with the White House counsel’s office and the people who are representing the president in the well of the Senate.”

The Nation (Opinion): Impeachment Needs to Move to the Streets

By Jeet Heer

In July of 2019, the people of Puerto Rico showed that you can remove a corrupt chief executive without recourse to impeachment. Governor Ricardo A. Rosselló, already unpopular thanks to his administration’s incompetent response to Hurricane Maria, became the target of a mass movement pushing for his ouster after the leak of text messages demonstrating that he and his cronies were engaged in sleazy backroom deals and used crude, misogynistic language. Over the course of two weeks, hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans flooded the streets in raucous, disruptive protests. There was talk of impeaching Rosselló—but that proved unnecessary once he resigned in the face of the public’s revolt. Unleashing the power of mass protest to force resignation is rare in America but common elsewhere. Indeed, we seem to be living in an age when it’s not unusual for street protesters to topple governments. From South Korea to Spain to Iceland to Finland, street protests have played a key role in bringing down despised heads of government.

State

Alabama

Arizona

By Laurie Roberts

Martha McSally must be quaking in her pumps. In just nine months, Arizona's junior senator will face Daniel McCarthy in the Republican primary. Daniel who? You ask? Well on Sunday, this 34-year-old businessman had a prime opportunity to show Arizona voters who he is and he certainly did. He's Dan Aykroyd. I swear. McCarthy did an interview with 12 News' Brahm Resnik that appeared on Sunday Square Off. Or, as I now call it, Saturday Night Live The Morning After. Think Aykroyd,, in that Christmas classic, hawking his "Bag O' Glass." Just how badly did his interview go? It's difficult to really capture just how badly this interview went for the 34-year-old business executive who up and decided that he's ready to represent us all in the United States Senate. He started out by explaining how Republican Gov. Doug Ducey is running a "banana republic." Looking for the other side of the story? Subscribe today for access to even more opinions.

Tucson.com: Letter: RE: If McSally doesn't vote to convict, she must go

By Jeffrey McConnell

The writer demands that Sen. Martha McSally vote to convict the sitting president of whatever charges that the House has concocted and if she doesn't, it's adios amiga.

While I actually don't believe in single-vote litmus tests by either party, the Star, to their credit, is intent to give equal space to the other side; so this is it. Sen. Kyrsten Sinema should pack her bags and go home if she votes to convict Trump. Arrivederci amica . Perhaps I should bolster my response with colorful language, since the letter author labeled the president as a "two-bit grafter conman" on the day that he is getting the Democrats to release the hostage USMCA treaty and is nailing down the phase one China trade deal. Should we assume that Trump has conned Mexico, Canada and China? Sayonara letter submitter.

Jeffrey McConnell

West side

Tucson.com (LTE): Letter: Stumped McSally?

By Scott Lukomski, Northeast side

Martha McSally must feel stymied by the candidacy of Mark Kelly. His aeronautic achievements are far more impressive. So she's unable to play that old Air Force pilot card for any measurable gain. For the same reason she's unable to spew falsehoods about Kelly, as is her historical approach to campaigning, as it will be obvious that it's just self-serving, even to her Republican supporters. And she can't run on her Senate record to date as there is nothing to offer. I suppose she could hang her helmet with Trump and Pence. But the public (even in AZ) are wising up to that travesty. She's been a bit reluctant, it seems, to embrace that sinking ship even though she was all onboard a year ago. Despite the \$\$\$\$ being heaped upon her by the GOP to support her campaign she's caught in the middle and clueless as to direction. Status quo for McSally...clueless

Scott Lukomski

Northeast side

Colorado

Colorado Public Radio: US Senate Candidate Andrew Romanoff Imagines A Climate Change-Ravaged Hellscape In A New Ad. Is That Good Politics?

By Sam Brasch

At some point in the not so distant future, a young girl in Colorado Springs can't go outside. The temperature is 127 degrees Fahrenheit. Her father wears a hazmat suit and a gas mask as he builds a roof from emergency blankets. Her pregnant mother slams a radio crackling with warnings of massive tornadoes and dangerous air. Her parents argue until breathless in their makeshift shelter, trapped in a terrible future ravaged by climate change. "I just hope we can see the sunshine again one day," she narrates. This bleak scene isn't the opening of a new Mad Max movie. It's the hellscape Democrat Andrew Romanoff imagines in his first U.S. Senate campaign video, "Home." The former state House speaker is betting a progressive stance on climate change can help him overcome a wide Democratic primary field — including former Governor John Hickenlooper — and defeat Republican U.S. Senator Cory Gardner next November.

By Saja Hindi

U.S. Senate Democratic candidate Andrew Romanoff's first campaign video, released Monday, is a dramatic portrayal of a climate emergency "in the not so distant future." Romanoff, a former Colorado House speaker, is trying to unseat Republican U.S. Sen. Cory Gardner, but first he needs to get past former Gov. John Hickenlooper and others in the Democratic primary. The 4-minute, 16-second apocalyptic video, "Home," begins in Colorado Springs with a young girl saying, "what I miss most is the sunshine," as she and her family are confined in a bunker, avoiding a 127-degree temperature and poor air quality. People in hazmat suits line the bunker with foil. It goes on to show scenes of natural disasters and news reports of climate issues. "This place makes me sad," she said. "But it makes mommy sadder. Mommy says baby brother will be born soon, but that it's not safe for him or for me." In the video, Romanoff says the view is not a far-off threat.

Colorado Times Recorder: Buck: Gardner Is Smart to Act Like the Impartial Juror He's Not

By Jason Salzman

On conservative KNUS last week, host Steffan Tubbs asked U.S. Rep. Ken Buck (R-CO) why Colorado Sen. Cory Gardner wasn't speaking out more on impeachment. Buck replied with, "I think Cory is absolutely right. Cory will be part of the jury in the near future, and I think Cory is demonstrating that he is entering this with an open mind, that he wants to see the evidence. But Cory is a thoughtful and he is a senator that is well-respected because he holds his cards close to his vest. And I think that that Cory Gardner, when he speaks and when he says, 'I've listened to the evidence and this is my vote,' it's much more convincing than if he was a partisan all the way along." In fact, Gardner hasn't been spewing out news releases on impeachment, like KNUS' Steffan Tubbs wants him to do. But the senator has already called the impeachment inquiry a "total circus" He also voted for a Senate resolution condemning the inquiry.

Georgia

Georgia Public Broadcasting: Judge OKs Purge Of 300,000 Inactive Georgia Voter Registrations

By Stephen Fowler

A federal judge has ruled that Georgia can move forward with a planned purge of more than 300,000 inactive voter registrations Monday night. However, U.S. District Court Judge Steve Jones has scheduled a hearing for Thursday to determine whether some of those registrations must be reinstated to the inactive voter list. At issue is a provision of Georgia law that removes voters from the rolls for not voting or having any contact with elections officials, often known as no-contact or "use it or lose it." The 120,561 registrations set to be removed belong to Georgia voters who have had no contact with elections officials for at least seven years: three years of inactivity followed by non-voting in two federal election cycles and then a failure to respond to a notice mailed out by the secretary of state's office.

Atlanta Journal Constitution: UPDATE: Federal judge allows Georgia voter registration purge

By Mark Niesse

A federal judge allowed Georgia election officials to cancel about 300,000 inactive voters as planned Monday night. U.S. District Judge Steve Jones said Monday that he will further consider the issue Thursday, but in the meantime the voter registration cancellation can move forward. Fair Fight Action, an organization suing the state over voting rights, had asked Jones to halt the removal of about 120,000 inactive voters from the state's rolls. The rest of the cancellations target people who have moved away. A Georgia law, known as "use it or lose it," allows registrations to be canceled after voters fail to participate in elections for several years. Jones said in court that voters could be reinstated if he later decides they shouldn't have been canceled. The Georgia secretary of state's office intends to move forward with its cancellation process late Monday night. By Tuesday morning, the number of registered voters in Georgia will have shrunk from about 7.4 million to 7.1 million. "Georgians should not lose their right to vote simply because they have not expressed that right in recent elections," said Fair Fight Action CEO Lauren Groh-Wargo. "Georgia's practice of removing voters who have declined to participate in recent elections violates the United States Constitution."

Iowa

Iowa Starting Line: Second Watchdog Group Files FEC Complaint Against Ernst

By Elizabeth Meyer

A second watchdog group announced today it filed a complaint with the Federal Election Commission in response to reporting about Sen. Joni Ernst's ties to an Iowa-based "dark money" organization. The nonprofit Campaign for Accountability (CfA) asked the FEC in a letter to investigate the campaign's ties to Iowa Values, a 501 (c)(4) allegedly working with Ernst to help reelect her to the Senate. On Dec. 9, the American Democracy Legal Fund also called for an investigation into Ernst's campaign. Campaign finance laws forbid political nonprofits like Iowa Values from directly coordinating with politicians or making advocacy for a candidate a central part of their operations. "Federal campaign finance laws explicitly outlaw attempts by elected officials to circumvent disclosure laws by raising money for outside dark money groups," said Daniel Stevens, executive director of the Campaign for Accountability, in a statement. "Sen. Ernst appears to have directed her campaign aides to run a shadow campaign operation through a nonprofit that doesn't have to disclose its donors."

Gazette (LTE): Senate GOP isn't passing necessary legislation

Sens. Chuck Grassley and Joni Ernst insist the U. S. House is spending all its time on impeachment rather than issues important to Iowans. I see the same implication in ads from the campaigns against U.S. Rep. Abby Finkenauer. Please read "Votes in Congress" in The Gazette from the last 11 months, or look at Congress.gov or govtrack.us and you will see that the House is passing legislation on a wide variety of issues while the Senate is confirming judges, ambassadors, and executive branch appointees, including many replacements. Mitch McConnell and the Senate have rarely taken up legislation passed by the House or passed Senate bills. Ernst blocked reauthorization of VAWA. Grassley keeps touting his efforts to lower drug prices, although I don't see results. Meanwhile Finkenauer introduced bills affecting Iowans—assistance for new farmers and new teachers, fixing bridges, improving rural roads, community investment in infrastructure, small business innovation, broadband access, keeping physicians in high need areas, military readiness. Bills she co-sponsored involve childcare, minimum wage, healthcare, mental health, senior support, education, voting rights, and many other issues. Compare the work of the U. S. House and Senate this year and draw your own conclusions.

Nancy Sauerman

Cedar Rapids**Newton Daily News: Graham vying for Sen. Ernst seat**

By Christopher Braunschweig

Portraying herself as a candidate more akin to the plights of regular people, Kimberly Graham's Sunday campaign stop in a Newton home couldn't have been more laid back. A group of Jasper County Democrats huddled around a cellphone and listened to the last two minutes of the Green Bay Packers and Chicago Bears football game, a curtain had fallen mid-stump speech and was nonchalantly fixed by the homeowner and candidate, guests were eating finger foods and the discussions at one point centered on the quality of Hy-Vee pizza. However casual these types of visits are, Graham affirmed they are still valuable and give her a better chance to hear what people's concerns are (besides which Iowa pizza is best). Rather than talk at people for 10 minutes at a time, the candidate vying for U.S. Sen. Joni Ernst's seat prefers to have actual conversations with voters on a one-on-one basis.

Chattanooga Times Free Press: Cooper's Eye on the Left: Anti-Semitic congresswoman spreads the hate around

By Clint Cooper

Green(field) with PAC money

Theresa Greenfield, a Democrat who is hoping to earn her party's nomination to oppose first-term U.S. Sen. Joni Ernst, R-Iowa, has said a tenet of her "Putting People First" campaign is not taking corporate political action committee (PAC) donations. "I hear about getting big money out of politics," she said. "The corruption, the influence of corporations, the outsizedness of special interest. Regular everyday Iowans, they just think it's not fair. And you're right, it's not fair. I have taken a pledge to not accept any corporate PAC donations for this race." Greenfield may claim she is technically following what she said, but the nonprofit Open Secrets recently revealed the Democratic leadership PAC has poured \$186,000 into her race. And much of that PAC

Kansas

WIBW: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's personal Twitter account raises questions

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's new personal Twitter account has some wondering if it is a sign he will run for an open seat. The Kansas City Star reports that a source close to Pompeo said that he needed to set up a personal Twitter account for future plans. Many are questioning if he will run for Retiring Senator Pat Roberts' seat. Former Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach is the current Republican front-runner. Pompeo's account already has more than 10,000 followers. While Pompeo has an official account for his role as Secretary of State Pompeo could use his personal account for campaign purposes.

Foreign Policy: Pompeo Edges Closer to Senate Run

By Robbie Gramer & Lara Seligman

Pompeo Tiptoes Into 2020 Election Cycle

For months, U.S. Secretary of State Pompeo has batted away rumors he will step down from his post as chief diplomat to run for Senate in his adopted home state of Kansas. But as the 2020 election cycle looms, Republican strategists and sources close to Pompeo have hinted that he will run, though no decision has been announced. So have the secretary of state's own actions. Over the weekend, Pompeo created a personal Twitter account, which he will "use for future plans," according to a source close to the secretary. And Sen. Ted Cruz, a noted Iran hawk, at last unblocked the nomination of Stephen Biegun, the current North Korea envoy and a possible Pompeo replacement, to be the next deputy secretary of state.

Kentucky

AP: McConnell announces run for 7th term after vowing to rig impeachment trial for Trump

By Staff

McConnell made his reelection bid official after saying that he will do whatever the White House wants in the impending impeachment trial against Donald Trump.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell filed for reelection Friday for a seventh term, after he vowed to rig the impeachment trial for Donald Trump. McConnell, the longest-serving U.S. senator in Kentucky history, has tied himself closely to Trump as he prepares to defend himself against a host of Democrats wanting to unseat him. McConnell noted that among the four congressional leaders — the top-ranking Republican and Democratic leaders in both chambers — he's the only one from the U.S. heartland. "What I do is look out for Middle America and, in particular, my favorite state in Middle America — Kentucky," McConnell told reporters at the state Capitol.

Maine

Maine Beacon (Opinion): Does Collins even have a clue?

By Hugh Bowden

When it comes to our potentially treasonous president, does Senator Susan Collins even have a clue what's going on? It would appear that the answer is a resounding "no." A recent investigation by some of the nation's major media makes it clear that President Donald Trump, despite several warnings, continues to use his personal cell phone to make all manner of calls that he does not want to appear in the White House communications log. Given the technological capability of several foreign powers to listen into the communications of our government officials, Trump's continued use of non-secure devices to make calls is nothing less than a blatant risk to our national security. That, by itself, certainly rises to an impeachable offense. But at this point, good old Collins hasn't had a word to say about the matter. That's just one more concrete piece of evidence that the majority in this Republican-controlled Senate live only to bow and kiss the ring of their would-be king.

Central Maine (LTE): Collins has put party over principle

Sen. Susan Collins long ago missed the opportunity to create her own Margaret Chase Smith moment and

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decry rampant corruption in the White House. Sadly, she has fallen into line behind Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, prioritizing party loyalty. Collins now floods our airwaves with ads and hopes we'll forget how she voted to emplace Brett Kavanaugh on the Supreme Court. She also voted to confirm lifetime appointments for almost all 112 Trump federal district judge nominees and 48 appellate court judges. All were vetted by the libertarian Federalist Society, which opposes abortion access, gun control, LGBTQ equality, environmental regulations, and labor rights. One of the judges, Jonathan A. Kobes, was rated "unqualified" by the American Bar Association. Collins cast the decisive affirmative vote producing a 50-50 tie, subsequently broken by Vice President Mike Pence. Collins also voted for ABA-unqualified nominees Leonard Gras (confirmed 50-48) and Charles Goodwin (52-42).

Central Maine: Sen. Collins hasn't acted with integrity

Mainers expect our elected officials to have and act with integrity, no matter the party they belong too. Consider Sen. Susan Collins' actions and words for two major political decisions she made in the last three years. The first was her ever-evolving reasons for voting in favor of President Donald Trump's tax cuts. There was not a single public or committee hearing on the 1,000-plus page tax law that included handwritten pages. First, Sen. Collins said a deal was struck with President Trump and Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to mitigate the effects of effectively repealing the Affordable Care Act mandate, which she voted for, as long as Republicans passed the bipartisan Alexander-Murray bill to stabilize the ACA exchanges. Then it was a promise of two bills being brought to the floor for votes to shore up the ACA. Then it was the bills would come forward in 2018, and finally, she says her vote was never contingent on the bills. Next came the highly contentious Kavanaugh confirmation. In her floor speech justifying support of Kavanaugh, Collins stated, "I found her testimony to be sincere, painful, and compelling. I believe that she is a survivor of a sexual assault and that this trauma has upended her life." Then she said Dr. Blasey Ford must be mistaken.

Central Maine (LTE): GOP must surrender blind loyalty

Sen. Susan Collins is withholding judgment on the impeachment issue so that she can be an impartial juror in a Senate trial. But Sen. Lindsey Graham has declared President Trump is innocent. Should Graham be recused? Republicans charge the impeachment issue is a partisan affair. If they would surrender their blind loyalty and face facts, there would be bipartisan support for impeachment.

Jonathan Robbins
Whitefield

Michigan

New Hampshire

New Mexico

North Carolina

South Carolina

Washington Post (Opinion): The deplorable hypocrisy of Lindsey Graham and the Republican Party

By Jonathan Capehart

Sen. Lindsey O. Graham (R-S.C.) is a curious fellow. One year, he's warning of the dangers that then-candidate Donald Trump posed to the Republican Party. The next, year he's defending President Trump and bragging "I'm not trying to pretend to be a fair juror" should articles of impeachment against Trump come to

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the Senate. Or, as Jennifer Rubin more aptly put it, Graham is in the throes of “boot-licking and willful ignorance of a ‘quid pro quo.’” It’s all so sad and shameful — for him, his party and our nation. “Lindsey ... A cycle ago? Two cycles ago? He was every Democrat’s favorite Republican in South Carolina. Pragmatic, consensus builder, get things done,” Steve Benjamin told me when I interviewed him last month. Benjamin is the Democratic mayor of Columbia, S.C., who has known and worked with Graham for years. “We just don’t recognize Senator Graham anymore. We just don’t recognize him. He was pretty effective and pragmatic until just a few years ago when things started to change pretty dramatically,” Benjamin said.

MSNBC: Graham in 1998: ‘Don’t decide the case before the case’s end’

By Steve Benen

In 1998, then-Rep. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) was an impeachment manager against Bill Clinton, urging senators to remove the Democratic president from office. The South Carolina Republican adopted standards at the time that he seems eager to abandon now. Over the weekend, arguably the most striking example to date emerged.

On Saturday, a clip of Graham during the impeachment of President Bill Clinton made the rounds on social media, showing the then-representative make an appeal to his colleagues not to rush through the process or make a judgment before it’s over.

“I have a duty far greater than just getting to the next election,” Graham said then. “Members of the Senate have said, ‘I understand everything there is about this case, and I won’t vote to impeach the president.’ Please allow the facts to do the talking.... Don’t decide the case before the case’s end.”

Texas

Dallas Morning News: Texas Senate candidate MJ Hegar plays the combat veteran card – and did she mention she’s a ‘disrupter?’

By Robert T. Garrett

As she looks confidently to November, and a chance to try to pack U.S. Sen. John Cornyn “off to take his three taxpayer-funded pensions,” MJ Hegar is selling her brand hard. She’s the most distinctive ballot option the Democrats have offered, Hegar insists -- the one with the secret sauce. It usually doesn’t take long for her to highlight how she’s a combat veteran, winner of a Purple Heart for heroism in Afghanistan. Interviewed before a live audience at the *Texas Tribune’s* headquarters in Austin recently, Hegar was asked what makes her different from the other 12 Democratic hopefuls in the March 3 primary. “I won’t speak ill against my primary partners,” she replied. “We’re walking arm and arm in the same direction.” But she subtly stiff-armed opponents, saying voters are tired of lawyers, “people that are kind of in the political echo chamber.” The swipe politely dismissed most of her major rivals. It also teed up her most audacious pitch: For Texas Democrats, whose hopes were whetted by startling results in the 2018 midterms, who crave more good news next year, she’s the best bet. “We have not fielded a combat veteran as a Democrat in a statewide election in a state like Texas that is so pro-military and patriotic,” she told *Tribune* cofounder Evan Smith.

NBC DFW: Senate Candidate MJ Hegar Gets DSCC Endorsement

By Staff

On Monday, the Democratic Senate Campaign Committee, endorsed MJ Hegar in the race for U.S. Senate in Texas. The DSCC is the campaign arm of the democrats in the senate. Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto, Chair of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, issued the following endorsement of decorated combat veteran Hegar in the senate race:

“Texas has emerged as a battleground opportunity for Democrats up and down the ballot, and MJ Hegar is the strongest candidate to flip the U.S. Senate seat. As a decorated combat veteran and working mother, MJ has both the courage and independence to put Texas first and is running on the issues that matter most to Texans: making health care and prescription drugs more affordable, protecting coverage for Texans with pre-existing conditions, and taking action to address climate change. We are proud to support MJ in her fight to continue her public service in the U.S. Senate.”

Dallas Morning News: Senate candidates who want to face John Cornyn prepare for two-month sprint to March primary

By Gromer Jeffers Jr.

Case 3:20-cv-00048-OLG Document 86-1 Filed 09/15/20 Page 75 of 150

The ghosts of Beto O'Rourke and Julián Castro are no longer shaking chains in the Democratic contest for Senate. So there are no excuses left for Democrats looking to break from a crowded pack to challenge Republican incumbent John Cornyn in what party leaders brag is a winnable race. Last week the field was set, and the specter of O'Rourke and Castro jumping into the race isn't an impediment for the lesser-known candidates. Democrats have their choices, for better or worse — 12 candidates in all. After the holiday season, the Democratic Senate hopefuls will stage a two-month sprint to the March 3 Texas primaries. The top two finishers will advance to a May runoff that will determine the nominee against Cornyn. For most of 2019, the candidates toiled in obscurity because voters were tuned into the presidential race or hoping that a well-known candidate like O'Rourke — the 2018 Senate nominee against Ted Cruz — would join the fray.

Texas Tribune: Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee endorses MJ Hegar in crowded U.S. Senate primary

By Patrick Svitek

The Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee is endorsing MJ Hegar in the crowded primary to challenge U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas. The move by the DSCC, the political arm of Senate Democrats, is one of the biggest developments yet in the nominating contest, which has drawn a dozen candidates — some more serious than others but no decisive frontrunners. Hegar, the former Air Force helicopter pilot and 2018 congressional candidate, entered the primary in April and has emerged as the top fundraiser. But polls show the race remains wide open as Democrats look to pick up where they left off from Beto O'Rourke's near-miss 2018 loss to the state's junior senator, Ted Cruz. "Texas has emerged as a battleground opportunity for Democrats up and down the ballot, and MJ Hegar is the strongest candidate to flip the U.S. Senate seat," the DSCC's chairwoman, Nevada Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto, said in a statement.

Dallas Morning News: Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee backs MJ Hegar for Senate against John Cornyn

By Gromer Jeffers Jr.

The Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee on Monday endorsed MJ Hegar for Senate, picking the former Air Force helicopter pilot over four other major contenders in the crowded Texas primary field. "Texas has emerged as a battleground opportunity for Democrats up and down the ballot, and MJ Hegar is the strongest candidate to flip the U.S. Senate seat," said DSCC Chairwoman Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto in a prepared statement. "As a decorated combat veteran and working mother, MJ has both the courage and independence to put Texas first and is running on the issues that matter most to Texans: making health care and prescription drugs more affordable, protecting coverage for Texans with pre-existing conditions, and taking action to address climate change. We are proud to support MJ in her fight to continue her public service in the U.S. Senate." Hegar, 43, said she was ready to win the nomination and then beat Republican incumbent John Cornyn. "As a rescue helicopter pilot flying wildfire suppression missions, I was trained to find the biggest bucket of water and use it to put out the biggest fire we could find," she said Monday in a statement. "I got into this race because that fire is in the Senate, and it is my duty to do what I can to fix.

Statesman: Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee endorses MJ Hegar

By Nicole Cobler

The Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee endorsed MJ Hegar, a retired Air Force helicopter pilot, in a crowded field of primary candidates hoping to challenge U.S. Sen. John Cornyn in November. The Monday endorsement could help boost Hegar's campaign in a race where recent polls have shown that no candidate is well known statewide. "Texas has emerged as a battleground opportunity for Democrats up and down the ballot, and MJ Hegar is the strongest candidate to flip the U.S. Senate seat," U.S. Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto, a Democrat from Nevada and chairwoman of the committee, said in a statement. "As a decorated combat veteran and working mother, MJ has both the courage and independence to put Texas first and is running on the issues that matter most to Texans: making health care and prescription drugs more affordable, protecting coverage for Texans with pre-existing conditions, and taking action to address climate change. We are proud to support MJ in her fight to continue her public service in the U.S. Senate."

Houston Chronicle: Senate Democrats endorse MJ Hegar in crowded race to challenge John Cornyn

By Benjamin Wermund

Texas voters are still getting to know the Democrats in the race to challenge U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, but Democrats in D.C. have their pick: Former Air Force pilot MJ Hegar, who the Democratic Senatorial Campaign

Committee endorsed on Monday. The endorsement from the Senate Democrats sets Hegar up as the establishment pick to unseat Cornyn in 2020 as the party seeks to build on Beto O'Rourke's near-win over U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz in 2018. "Texas has emerged as a battleground opportunity for Democrats up and down the ballot, and MJ Hegar is the strongest candidate to flip the U.S. Senate seat," said Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto, a Nevada Democrat who chairs the committee. "As a decorated combat veteran and working mother, MJ has both the courage and independence to put Texas first and is running on the issues that matter most to Texans: making health care and prescription drugs more affordable, protecting coverage for Texans with pre-existing conditions, and taking action to address climate change. We are proud to support MJ in her fight to continue her public service in the U.S. Senate."

KVUE: Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee endorses MJ Hegar in Texas U.S. Senate race

By Shawna M Reding

MJ Hegar, a Democratic candidate in the Texas U.S. Senate race, has been endorsed by the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, according to a press release issued Dec. 16. The chair of the committee, Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto, said Hegar is the strongest candidate to flip the U.S. Senate seat currently occupied by Sen. John Cornyn. "As a decorated combat veteran and working mother, MJ has both the courage and independence to put Texas first and is running on the issues that matter most to Texans: making health care and prescription drugs more affordable, protecting coverage for Texans with pre-existing conditions, and taking action to address climate change," Masto said in a statement. "We are proud to support MJ in her fight to continue her public service in the U.S. Senate." Hegar responded to the endorsement Monday. "As a rescue helicopter pilot flying wildfire suppression missions, I was trained to find the biggest bucket of water and use it to put out the biggest fire we could find. I got into this race because that fire is in the Senate, and it is my duty to do what I can to fix it," Hegar said in part.

KVUE: Texas This Week: Michael Cooper, candidate for U.S. Senate

By Ashley Goudeau

The filing deadline to be on the Texas March primary ballot has come and gone and now the races are revving up. Plus, Ashley Goudeau sat down with U.S. Senate candidate Michael Cooper to discuss his campaign.

Three things to know in Texas politics

The filing deadline to be on the Texas March Primary ballot was Monday, Dec. 9. Now that we know who's running, we can see that the race for Congress should be interesting. There are Republicans and Democrats filed to run for every seat in Texas as Democrats try to flip the state blue and Republicans fight to keep it red. Democratic presidential candidate and former Vice President Joe Biden was in Texas on Friday. He attended a community event in San Antonio, followed by a fundraiser. Georgetown University's Center for Children and Families released a new report this week that found the number of American children younger than six who don't have health insurance significantly increased from 2016 to 2018. And the rate of young children without health insurance in Texas is significantly higher than the rest of the country. Texas has the second-highest rate, falling behind Alaska.

The Hill: DSCC endorses combat veteran MJ Hegar in Texas race to unseat Cornyn

By Rebecca Klar

The Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee endorsed combat veteran MJ Hegar in the Texas Senate primary on Monday. DSCC Chair Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto (D-Nev.) pitched the former Air Force helicopter pilot as the strongest candidate to face Sen. John Cornyn (R) in a tough election for Democrats next year. "As a decorated combat veteran and working mother, MJ has both the courage and independence to put Texas first and is running on the issues that matter most to Texans: making health care and prescription drugs more affordable, protecting coverage for Texans with pre-existing conditions, and taking action to address climate change," Cortez Masto said. "We are proud to support MJ in her fight to continue her public service in the U.S. Senate." Hegar is one of a dozen Democrats vying for the party nomination ahead of next year's election and has led the primary field in fundraising. There is not yet a clear frontrunner, though, based on a September poll.

Daily Kos: Daily Kos Election Live Digest 12/16

By Staff

TX-Sen: On Monday, the DSCC endorsed Air Force veteran and 2018 House nominee MJ Hegar in the March

The Intercept: DCCC TO CONSULTANTS: HELPING TO ELECT A REPUBLICAN? SURE, WE’LL WORK WITH YOU.

By Aida Chavez & Akela Lacy

... On Monday, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee announced its endorsement of M.J. Hegar in the competitive primary for the seat currently held by Republican Sen. John Cornyn. Hegar hasn’t been a committed Democrat until recently and even voted in the 2016 Republican primary, The Intercept reported in August. Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez’s campaign called the DSCC endorsement “tone-deaf” to the Texas electorate; she’s running as a progressive in the crowded Democratic primary race for the Senate seat. “They have decided to ignore several more qualified and experienced candidates of color, who have done the work to transform the politics of our state, in favor of a former Republican,” Tzintzún Ramirez’s campaign manager, David Sanchez, said in a statement.

From: Regina Anderson [randerson@dsc.org]
Sent: 11/8/2019 3:04:22 PM
To: Real Time Clips [RealTimeClips@dsc.org]
Subject: TX-Fox News Radio: Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) Is Worried Republicans Have Gotten Lazy In Texas

Fox News Radio: Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) Is Worried Republicans Have Gotten Lazy In Texas

By Staff

11/8/2019

https://radio.foxnews.com/2019/11/08/senator-john-cornyn-r-tx-is-worried-republicans-have-gotten-lazy-in-texas/?utm_source=divr.it&utm_medium=twitter

Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) spoke with Brian Kilmeade about supporting his friend Jeff Sessions running for the Senate in Alabama, not seeing anything impeachable against President Trump and how democrats latching onto President Trump's phone call with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky is sad and sucking all the oxygen out of Washington's ability to pass trade deals. Senator Cornyn also discussed the possibility of facing off against Beto O'Rourke or Julian Castro when he runs for reelection in 2020 and expressed concern about Republicans getting lazy in Texas, pointing to Beto O'Rourke running a close campaign against Senator Ted Cruz which he feels has emboldened Democrats in Texas.

Full transcript below:

Brian Kilmeade: And support him if he's leading in the polls. And as was pointed out by Senator Lankford -- was it Senator Lankford? It seems like everything is bleeding into the next. Senator Rubio and , they couldn't have been more adversarial. They get along great. Ted Cruz. Ted Cruz has got the president's back. I could never believe. I was at the RNC when he was there ripping the president on his nominee -- formal nominations, which, by the way, just one of the many surreal moments in the history of politics. As the president walks in and Ted Cruz is vilifying him and his family at the RNC. It's crazy, but he's made up with just about everybody. Lindsey Graham. He gave out his cell number. So, -- and they're buddies. So, maybe they can get over this. So, I'm going to take some questions. 1-866-408-7669, Senator next. But just to come back here to KRMG Studios, where a special thanks to -- I want to get this right.

Female Speaker: Baker Sleep.

Brian Kilmeade: Baker Sleep. I just saw these beds and you're going to be able to get this nationally. Check out Baker Sleep and the technology behind it. They supported this entire event, supply the -- made it possible to bring all these great listeners down. So, you got -- if you think you're sleeping in a bed and if you toss and turn one time, then you're eligible for a Baker Sleep bed, okay? So, -- what's your name?

Ellen Lucas: Ellen Lucas.

Brian Kilmeade: Hey, Ellen.

Ellen Lucas: How are you?

Brian Kilmeade: What's on your mind? Former New Yorker.

Ellen Lucas: Former New Yorker, lived there for actually 15 years when I've figured it out. Love Oklahoma and intend to stay here. But question was and really for you, I was a political science major in college because actually, I like history. I like government. I liked all of that. Now, as time wears on, and you look at the environment that we're in, and you look

at the ineffective way that people are acting in, you know, in Congress or other places in government. Not necessarily all because they don't want to be effective, but it's become so gridlocked.

Brian Kilmeade: I know.

Ellen Lucas: How do you end up even trying to have young people have an interest -- to serve?

Brian Kilmeade: Our best hope is for more military men and women to get involved on both sides of the aisle. They're already showing they care more about the country than themselves. So, let's continue with that mindset in there. So, I'm always pleased to have that.

Ellen Lucas: How does somebody who likes results, who wants achievement, who has been in their own business and wants to do well? How do they exist in that environment?

Brian Kilmeade: Well -- and thanks so much for the question. I always say this. We're not the first generation to have problems. Keep passing things in Congress. It was set up to go slow, I get it. But I do think as much as when the Tea Party started and when now this other movement started on the left with the AOC and the squad and does extreme behavior, they're never gonna have a big constituency. But it makes others -- and I know I hate to say this, afraid to say anything because then they get primaried. My hope is, after this election, if the president wins, I think the fever breaks, especially in the first year and a half. And it becomes -- that becomes in to cut a deal. And we're going to be talking about deals that the president got the most out of and other ones he didn't. And some, he's going to go back and get better deals. Or the next president, whether it's Nikki Haley or Tulsi Gabbard. I think after a while, there are gonna be people in office they care more about their country than their party. But right now, it is political death to cut an innovative deal. We're going to take a time out. Thanks so much for the question. We're going to take a time out and then go to Senator John Cornyn of Texas, who is in Washington. He might be able to answer your questions. Probably the first one I'll ask him. And then down the road, in about 90 minutes, I'll be sending Sam Houston, the Alamo Avengers, out on Tuesday. I just met someone related to Sam Houston. I'm going to dig that story out in just a moment.

Jeff Sessions: I just cannot see an impeachment case here. It's just been a continuous political attack on him from day one. Things that people have done that are perfectly innocent. I felt some of that myself or created and twisted to be something evil and improper. The president has conducted himself in this matter within the law, and I don't believe there's anything close to an impeachment case. I think that Democrats will basically vote it -- it looks like -- slink away and let the Senate reject it.

Brian Kilmeade: I'm just worried he's going to be way too commonplace after this. Senator -- the former senator Jeff Sessions, former Attorney General Jeff Sessions, weighing in on the magnitude of the impeachment case in front of the American people right now. Joining us now from Texas, from Washington, but Texas Senator John Cornyn. Round of applause here in Oklahoma. Senator, Senator.

Senator Cornyn: applaud for a Texan.

Brian Kilmeade: Yeah. Can you believe that? They're being very nice, but they have respect for you, sir, like most people do. Even Democrats say nice things about you. They just don't want to admit it. KRMG studios where we're coming from. Senator, do you want Jeff Sessions to run again?

Senator Cornyn: Well, Jeff Sessions is my friend, and I think he has conducted himself honorably through a very, very difficult period of time. And I think he's got every right to run. And I expect him to be the nominee and to win. So, I'll be trying to help every way I can.

Brian Kilmeade: All right. So, he has your support, and you have a lot of weight on the Republican side. And are you concerned about losing the Senate with all the money pouring in to take it away?

Senator Cornyn: Yeah, other than Alabama, Brian, we are playing defense because, you know. Places like Colorado, Maine, Arizona and North Carolina are some vulnerabilities for us. And we don't know in this topsy-turvy election season exactly what November 2020 is going to look like. But we're determined to hold the line. And really, the Senate is the firewall for really bad things happening in the country if things are to go south.

Brian Kilmeade: Have you seen anything in this impeachment inquiry as we get ready for public hearings that would change your support for the president?

Senator Cornyn: No, I haven't. You know, impeachment is a historic and really an event that has happened. This will be the fourth time in American history. It's never resulted in the removal of the president, even though Richard Nixon did resign. But I think what the Democrats are latching a hold of this telephone call as an impeachable offense is really sad. And I think we're going to be -- all the oxygen is going to be sucked out of Washington in terms of our ability to do other important things, like pass trade deals, lower prescription drug costs, pass a bill that improve our highways, bridges. All sort of basic fundamentals that people expect Congress to do. We're not going to be able to do any of that because of this impeachment mania one year before the next general election. It just doesn't make any sense to me.

Brian Kilmeade: So, right now, no one's running against you. Beto O'Rourke, it was is a big decision for him. He was the rock star for a while. Should he run against John Cornyn to run for president? I don't know if you heard, but the run for president didn't go well. "I'm going to take your gun and take down the wall" is not as popular as one would think on first blush. So, are you worried about him coming after you now?

Senator Cornyn: Well, the filing deadline is December that night. And so Julian Castro, or Beto O'Rourke could decide to get in the Senate race. You may not have noticed because nobody really knows who they are, but they're actually 10 other people who have said they're going to run for the Democratic nomination for the Senate. So, the close race between Beto and Ted Cruz in 2018 has emboldened Democrats and they're coming. And they think they could turn Texas around, but we aim to prove them wrong.

Brian Kilmeade: But it is changing. And how concerned are you that the influx of Californians especially is changing the Texas that you knew?

Senator Cornyn: Well, I never thought that refugees from socialism would want to repeat the mistakes that have been made in California and Texas. But I think, you know, to be honest, I think Republicans have gotten a little lazy in Texas. We've just assumed that we would always win these statewide races in the general election because we have since 1994 when George W. Bush was elected governor. But we've seen a huge surge in turnout. There were 8.3 million people who voted in 2018. We expect 11 million to vote in 2020. But we've got to go out and make the case and we have to push back against those who say socialism is the answer, because that's not the Texas model that's made us the envy of the rest of the country and indeed of the rest of the world.

Brian Kilmeade: Senator, I'm up against a break, but in researching Sam Houston and the Alamo Avengers, and spending so much time in Texas, I have a special coming out on the 17th on how Texas won their freedom. That is everything Texas is not. They want nothing handed to them.

Senator Cornyn: Absolutely, and Brian --

From: 'Press Texas Democratic Party' via TDP Press [tdp-press@googlegroups.com]
Sent: 1/6/2020 4:30:50 PM
To: Abhi Rahman [abhi@txdemocrats.org]
Subject: BREAKING: Texas Democratic Party, DSCC & DCCC Challenge Unconstitutional Signature Rule Harming Voter Registration Efforts

TEXAS DEMOCRATS

For Immediate Release

January 6, 2020

Contact: Abhi Rahman, (720)299-0654, press@txdemocrats.org

BREAKING: Texas Democratic Party, DSCC & DCCC Challenge Unconstitutional Signature Rule Harming Voter Registration Efforts

TX Counties Rejected More Than 2,400 Voter Registration Applications in 2018, Claiming They Lacked the Required “Wet” or Original Signature - Inconsistent with Other State Policies that Allow Voters to Use Electronic Signatures

Unlawful, Arbitrary, and Inconsistent Electronic Signature Ban Makes it Harder for Texans to Participate in Elections

Austin, TX -- The Texas Democratic Party, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee and Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee today filed a lawsuit challenging an unconstitutional electronic signature ban the Secretary of State created to urge counties to reject thousands of voter registration applications, making it harder for Texas to participate in elections.

In 2018, the Texas Secretary of State urged counties to reject thousands of voter registration forms with electronic or imaged signatures, claiming they lacked the required “wet” or original signatures. However, that electronic signature ban is inconsistent with Texas’s other state policies that allow voters to use electronic signatures to register to vote and is inconsistent with a federal court ruling that found no “legal impediment” to using electronic signatures.

The unconstitutional rule and its arbitrary use mean Texans do not have clear guidance on the application process, making it harder to register voters and for voters to participate in elections. Additionally, the electronic signature ban makes registering to vote even more difficult for Texans in rural communities without access to regular mailing service, and placed new barriers to voters who may need assistance returning their voter registration application.

Texas Democratic Party Chair Gilberto Hinojosa issued the following statement:

“For years, Texas Republicans have used every trick possible to make it harder for Texans to vote and to steal elections away from the rising Texas electorate.

“Republicans know Texas is changing, that’s why they continue to enact arbitrary rulings such as banning lawful electronic signatures. Texas Democrats will always fight to protect and expand the vote. That’s why today, as part of our efforts to build the largest voter protection program in state history, the Texas Democratic Party are joining our partners at the DSCC and DCCC to end this unconstitutional and inconsistent law that disproportionately harms rural voters who don’t have access to regular mail service.

“Democracy thrives when everyone participates. We thank the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee for partnering with us and working to end this heinous assault to one of our most sacred rights.”

Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Chair Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto issued the following statement:

“Registering to vote should be clear and easy but the electronic signature ban makes it harder for Texans to participate in elections – and we will not let that stand,” said “This challenge and the series of others we’ve taken to end burdens in our voting process reflect our commitment to making sure Texans can make their voices heard.”

Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chair Rep. Cheri Bustos issued the following statement:

“States should be working to make voting more accessible, not less. As the Chairwoman of House Democrats’ campaign arm, I am committed to taking on laws that place barriers to the ballot for voters. The reality is Texas’ electronic signature ban does not protect the vote; it only makes it harder for people, particularly folks in rural communities, to register to vote and make their voices heard. This unconstitutional ban does not make an ounce of sense, and it is the kind of arbitrary voter suppression that we’re working to tear down right now before even more harm is done to our Democracy.”

As part of a commitment to protect the integrity of elections across the country, Democrats have taken a series of legal actions in Texas. In October, Texas Democrats with the DSCC and DCCC filed a lawsuit against Texas’ ban on “mobile” early voting sites that serve voters living near colleges and universities, and those without reliable

access to transportation. In November, the same organizations challenged unconstitutional ballot order statutes in three battleground states - including Texas. Democrats secured a victory on a similar case in Florida, where the court confirmed the law requiring ballots list Republican candidates first gives GOP candidates an unfair advantage.

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Texas Democrats will never stop fighting back against all Republican attempts to suppress the vote. We won against David Whitley, we are in court to reverse the ban on mobile voting, and we will not stand any Republican attempt to make voting more difficult for every eligible Texan.

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From: Anna Lee Hirschi [annalee@mjfortexas.com]
Sent: 1/6/2020 10:18:49 AM
To: Anna Lee Hirschi [annalee@mjfortexas.com]
Subject: MJ Hegar Press Clips 1/6/2020

Press Clips

1/3 Questions About Politics in 2020 That Aren't 'Will Texas Turn Blue?' by Justin Miller [Texas Observer]

As we head into 2020, brace yourself for an onslaught of headlines from national media posing a reductive question: “Will Texas Turn Blue?” It’s become something of a biannual assignment for political commentators.

Yes, 2020 could very likely be a banner election cycle for Texas Democrats. The political future of the state is on the line for perhaps the first time this century. Democrats are charged up, brimming with grassroots activism, and eager to build on the progress made by Beto O’Rourke’s near-win and the substantial down-ballot gains that came with it. The possibility of a once-in-a-generation political realignment—fueled by a surge of young and diverse voters and a breakdown of the GOP’s suburban red wall—is, indeed, very real.

But be wary of those who pontificate on the political hue of Texas. Focusing on the question of whether Trump—and similarly, U.S. Senator John Cornyn—could lose here just obscures the many other potential sea changes that are just as consequential to the future of Lone Star politics, if not more so.

As we head into 2020, here are a handful of important questions that will better track the contours, trends, and dilemmas of this political moment.

1. Can Republicans Walk the Trump Tightrope in the Blue-ing ‘Burbs?

Donald Trump at a rally in Houston in 2018. GUS BOVA

Trump has become a liability for Republicans in the Texas suburbs. They won’t admit this fact in public, but they freely acknowledge it in private—House Speaker Dennis Bonnen did in a secretly recorded conversation, and so did a GOP staffer in a leaked memo. The state’s Republican leaders—Abbott, Patrick, Cruz, Cornyn, and on down—have shamelessly hitched their political wagons to Trump, wagering that staunch support is a safer bet than even the most timid opposition, if they want to keep winning statewide.

But the party’s wholesale adoption of Trumpism has created political vulnerabilities out in the trenches. The consequences of the Republican party’s allegiance to Trump will be found down the ballot in competitive suburban congressional and legislative districts in the Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, and Austin metros. You’ll learn far more from watching these races than a Trump rally at the Toyota Center.

Democrats are expected to make serious plays for at least a half-dozen suburban congressional seats, as well as more than a dozen state House seats that could be primed to flip amid demographic changes and Trump-weariness.

How Republicans navigate the politics of Trump in these districts will go a long way in showing whether the party believes it’s wise to pull away from the president in an effort to win back moderates and arrest Democrats’ advances into the suburbs, or if they prefer to scorch the earth and see what happens. The effectiveness of their chosen strategy could determine whether the Democratic surge in the suburbs in 2018 was the first stage of a larger sustained political shift—one that could cost Republicans control of the state House, several congressional districts, and, yes, help pave the way for a statewide upset—or if it was all just a mirage at

the end of the subdivision cul-de-sac.

2. Who Will Prevail in the Democratic Senate Primary?

For how much the national media loves Texas politics, the Democratic Senate primary race to take on Republican Senator John Cornyn has so far been a low-key, undercovered affair. Alas, the ideological battle being waged between progressives and moderates in the Democratic presidential primary seems to have sucked up all the political oxygen. But the Texas primary has taken on a somewhat similar (albeit more muted) dynamic.

The race has recently become animated by a debate over how to best build upon O'Rourke's 2018 campaign, which came within 200,000 votes of defeating Cruz. Candidates like organizer Cristina Tzintún Ramirez and former congressman Chris Bell have embraced policies like Medicare for All and mandatory assault weapon buybacks, while others like veteran and former congressional candidate MJ Hegar (who was recently endorsed by the Democratic Senate Campaign Committee) and Dallas state Senator Royce West have tacked toward the middle. Tzintún Ramirez believes progressive politics is the best way to mobilize a winning coalition of young people and voters of color, particularly the state's surging Latinx population. Hegar, meanwhile, argues that the path to statewide victory hinges not on ideology, but on a message of "ass-kicking" political independence that could better appeal to suburban and rural voters.

Even though he's (finally, officially) not running for Senate, Beto will still play a prominent part in the race. No candidate is likely capable of rekindling his political magic. But they all have their own interpretations of how to build on his 2018 campaign, casting the race with the inevitable question of WWBD—What Would Beto Do?

3. Can a New Guard Take on the Democratic Old Guard?

The resurgence of the Democratic Party in Texas has included a burgeoning progressive bloc that's grown more organized and self-assured. In 2020, insurgent candidates from Houston to Austin to deep South Texas are taking on establishment Democrats who, they contend, have grown out-of-step with the party base.

Jessica Cisneros, a 26-year-old lawyer, has won the support of a long list of national liberal groups as she seeks to oust Henry Cuellar, a conservative blue dog Democrat from Laredo. The 28th District—which stretches from Laredo along the border toward McAllen and up to the San Antonio suburbs—is firmly blue, but Cuellar argues that his political views mirror those of the voters. In his view, the 28th may be Democratic, but it's not liberal. Cisneros believes the district is more progressive than Cuellar lets on, and that voters simply haven't been offered a more progressive alternative. Down in Brownsville, state Senator Eddie Lucio Jr. is another conservative border Democrat facing a serious primary challenge.

At the local level, Harris County District Attorney Kim Ogg is also facing a challenger in the Democratic primary. First elected as a criminal justice reformer in 2016, Ogg has since drawn the ire of reform advocates for failing to follow through on her promises—most notably, on bail reform. Audia Jones, a former Harris County prosecutor who quit after becoming fed up with Ogg's leadership, is challenging Ogg from the left, focusing her campaign on a radical vision to dismantle mass incarceration.

Several veteran Democratic state lawmakers from Houston are also facing primary challenges. They include state Representative Harold Dutton, who has drawn heat for his role in advancing laws that paved the way for Houston's public school system to be taken over by the state, and state Senator Borris Miles, who has been accused of sexual misconduct.

In Travis County, Jose Garza, who led the labor advocacy group Workers Defense Project, and UT law professor Erin Martinson are challenging District Attorney Margaret Moore, who has been plagued by scandals over how she's handled sexual assault cases.

Established incumbents are extremely difficult to oust. But if these insurgent challengers are able to string together a series of primary upsets, they could usher in a new guard of Democratic leaders charting a new path for the party in Texas.

4. Could We See a Political Backslide?

Trump and Cornyn will likely win statewide in November. But even if they do, the political landscape might well have shifted in 2020. Texas is very likely entering a new era that features an actual functioning two-party political system. That's a reality essentially unknown in the state since the Karl Rovian Revolution in the 1990s broke the previous Democratic dominance and ushered in nearly 40 years of Republican control.

But, wait! There's always the chance that Texas will Texas and—with the right amount of GOP savvy, Democratic incompetence, or both—the electorate may just run back into the familiar arms of the GOP. Change, after all, is scary, and Republicans are quite good at exploiting those fears.

This has happened before. In 2006 and 2008, Democrats knocked off several Republican state reps and very nearly took control of the House, sparking hope of a liberal revival. But it didn't last. The tea party wave of 2010 swiftly decimated the Democrats' legislative ranks. And don't forget Wendy Davis' gubernatorial campaign implosion in 2014, which gutted the party's base.

Perhaps O'Rourke and the Democrats were just hitting their collective head on Texas' blue ceiling. And don't discount the possibility that a moribund Democratic presidential nominee, a lackluster Senate candidate, and, perhaps, a surge in Trump's favorability could all but crush the party's hopes of winning the state House and expanding its congressional seats. A far more dire scenario would be that Republicans are also able to wrest back the Dems' 2018 gains.

Voters don't always act in accordance with the tidy narratives favored by the media. More often, political shifts happen in confounding fits and starts.

Anyway, we'll have much more concrete answers to these questions in next year's obligatory year-end politics post. After all, hindsight is ... 2020.

MJ Hegar Tweets/Retweets

1/5/2020 Daniel is all tuckered out after a long day on the campaign trail, but I'm energized by the folks I met in Galveston, Lake Jackson, and Cypress today!

Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez Tweets/Retweets

1/4/2020 I know that in this race one way I'll be attacked is for my identity. I'll be attacked from both sides- and it's already started. Some say I am too Latina, too Mexican. How can I represent the needs of all Texans given my background of working on behalf of Latino families? 1/ To them I say: Yes, I have fought to protect the rights of Latino families- to improve schools, to tackle #studentdebt, to make jobs safer and better paid, to #keepfamilies together. But these aren't issues that just Latinos care about. They're issues that matter to everyone. 2/ So representing the needs of Latino families doesn't make me disqualified- it makes me uniquely qualified to be Texas' next Senator. Others say I am not actually #Latina or Mexican at all because my father is white- that I am just using my mother's heritage to win votes. 3/ My whole life people have tried to label me a certain way, to try to put me in a box. I know there is no one way to represent my heritage and roots. I am proud to be a MC-Mexican (Irish and Mexican). Soy orgullosa de mis raíces Irlandesas, Mexicanas, Europeas y Indígenas. 4/ I know my story represents those of millions of Texans that don't fit into any particular box. By telling our stories and owning who we are, we change the ideas of who we can be and what we can do. So what is your story? 5/5

Amanda Edwards Tweets/Retweets

1/5/2020 Clearly, I am not the only person getting excited about this opportunity to make history! We are building a people-powered movement focused on more than just making promises- it's about delivering results! #Amandafortexas

1/4/2020 Evan Smith @evanasmith NEW: I'll sit down with @AmandaForTexas, Democratic candidate for #txsen, on 1/16 at #Studio919 — the fifth in our series of conversations about this marquee 2020 race. RSVP: [LINK](#)

1/4/2020 Having a blast talking to residents as we block walk the community! #Amandafortexas #TurnTexasBlue #Onedooratatime VIDEO

1/3/2020 It was a windy day in The Valley, but a great one! I enjoyed my discussions about promoting economic opportunity and I look forward to many more! VIDEO

Royce West Clips

1/4 Democratic Senate Candidate Criticizes Trump Drone Strike by Dennis Spellman [Covering Katy News]

DALLAS (Covering Katy News) - Royce West, the Democratic Party candidate who hopes to replace longtime Republican Senator John Cornyn issued a statement Friday that is critical of President Trump's drone strike that killed an Iranian military leader who is linked to the murder of hundreds of American's overseas.

"President Trump's decision to direct the drone strike resulting in the killing of a top Iranian military leader without consulting Congressional leadership is irresponsible, and flies in the face of the Constitution and decades of collaboration between the executive and legislative branches of government," West said in his statement.

"History has taught us that before decisions of this magnitude are made they should be discussed with the top leaders of our country. Effective change doesn't come from the point of a gun or attack of a drone, but from diplomacy, and finding common ground. We've previously done that with Iran."

West was critical of both Texas Senators, Cornyn and Ted Cruz.

"Both of Texas' U.S. Senators should be condemning the President's actions today of not consulting congressional leadership. The consequences of President Trump's actions are likely to be grave, and cost precious American lives. Any decision that could potentially cost the lives of American should be done in conjunction with Congress," West said.

"When I am in the U.S. Senate, I will stand up to President Trump or any other President who fails to consult congressional leadership prior to engaging in irresponsible actions like this, which are detrimental to our foreign policy and national security. I will never support foreign policy that unnecessarily risks the life and blood of American men and women serving in our armed forces," West said.

Other Clips

1/5 Texas This Week: Annie Garcia, candidate for U.S. Senate by Ashley Goudeau [KVUE]

Annie Garcia, candidate for U.S. Senate

The number of Democrats running for president may be decreasing but that's not the case in the race to challenge Republican U.S. Senator John Cornyn. There are 12 Democrats in that race – including Annie Garcia, a small business owner and the founder of the nonprofit OpHeart, which supports children born with life-

threatening heart defects.

Ashley Goudeau sat down with Garcia to discuss her campaign.

Ashley Goudeau: For our viewers who may not be as familiar with your campaign, tell us a little bit about yourself and why you're running for the U.S. Senate.

Annie Garcia: "Well, so, my name is Annie Garcia and I was actually raised up the road in Georgetown, Texas. I went to Rice University and then I came back to town to get my JD at the UT Law. I live in Houston now. I have two small businesses and a small nonprofit organization.

But I also wanted to say that I lived in Ecuador for two years and in Spain for four months. I like to tell people that [it's] only thanks to a Texas public school education can I ask for your vote in English, Spanish and German. As to why I am running, it's a great question. I've never run for anything before. And I think it comes down to really three points for me. One is that I'm just fed up. I'm fed up with how hard it is for people to live in this country, and it's only getting worse. And I'm fed up with politicians that say they're going to fight for us but then there's no action taken. I also feel like we're running out of time. It would have been nice to have a nice, long resume of political achievements but the reality is that our planet is literally on fire and when we have elected officials that can go on Fox News and say that our president deserves a third term because of the crimes he's committed in office, we're in serious trouble. So, I feel an incredible sense of urgency in the moment that we're in. And then, finally, I would say, as a Texas Democrat, I'm pretty tired of losing and I know that we can regain John Cornyn's seat. And not only that, we can get our Democratic presidential candidate, the electoral college votes, we can take back our Texas House. It's an incredibly important race but we have to have the right candidate and I didn't see that. I didn't see anybody that had the political courage, the moral integrity or the work ethic, frankly, to inspire people again in how good government can be. So I entered the race."

Goudeau: Besides the obvious differences of you being a Democrat and Sen. John Cornyn being a Republican, what is it about him in particular that made you want to challenge him for this seat at this time?

Garcia: "Well, I feel the urgency of where we are now. It's not just his seat, it's what happens in our Senate. It's what happens in our state. And John Cornyn is – he carries the water for this administration. Name one thing that he has done that has helped Texans. We are separating children from their families at the border, we are losing children. We have children in our custody that are dying and our public education system has taken a huge hit. Where has he been for Texans?"

RELATED: The Last Word: Include civic responsibility in your New Year's resolutions

Goudeau: Let's talk about some of the issues that really impact folks right here in Texas. Perhaps the biggest issue, the thing on the forefront, is healthcare. We have the largest number, the largest rate of folks who don't have health insurance – both adults and children – in the entire country. How can we begin, in your opinion, to address healthcare and access to healthcare?

Garcia: "Well, so, I have a personal story about this. My daughter was born with an undiagnosed heart defect. At six weeks old, we took her into the emergency room, she was barely breathing and she ultimately would be diagnosed with this heart defect. She ended up having two open-heart surgeries and was in the ICU for 12 weeks. We didn't have insurance, but we were in Spain. So we didn't need health insurance. She got \$1.5 million of treatment and, had that happen in the United States, even with insurance, co-insurance, it would have been a \$200,000 bill for us. That would have broken our family, financially. And it's not just the lack of coverage – 25% of Americans don't have adequate coverage – it's also that 65% of personal bankruptcies are due to medical bills. And if you can get in the hospital, up to 400,000 people die due to medical error – 400,000. Our system is expensive, it doesn't cover everybody and it's not very good. And so, we need a system that looks like Spain. We need a system where every person never hesitates to take their child into the ER because they're

worried about how much that bill is going to be."

Goudeau: Another issue that we, unfortunately, are faced with – and just recently are faced with – are acts of mass violence. We just had an act happen in White Settlement, we recently saw what happened in El Paso, what happened in Midland-Odessa. When we have these types of incidents happen, the conversation generally turns to guns and what can be done about guns. What are your thoughts there?

Garcia: "I worry about how we have allowed the right to bear arms, this interpretation of the Second Amendment, to override every American's right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That is what we are sacrificing. It makes no sense that in this country we lose 40,000 people every year to gun violence. We are such an outlier in comparison to any other country in the world almost, except for Brazil. Any other country, any other industrialized country, we lose more people in this United States in one week, in one week, than what they lose in a whole year. This is because of the proliferation of guns, and that's what we need to focus on. And absolutely yes to all the low-hanging fruit – we need to close the loophole on private gun sales, we need to do background checks, we need to take weapons of war off of the streets – but we have to be smarter and more clever. We require drivers to have liability insurance, we should require gun owners to carry that same liability insurance. Insurance companies' entire business model is assessing risk. And we need to stop going and putting that cost onto society and instead make gun owners responsible for their own liability insurance."

Cornyn Clips

1/3 Here's how Texas politicians are reacting to the US strike that killed Iranian Gen. Qassim Soleimani by Samara Perez [Click 2 Houston]

After reports were confirmed that President Donald Trump commanded the U.S. military to kill Iranian General Qassim Soleimani, the news quickly became a trending topic on Twitter causing reactions from the public and politicians, including those from Texas.

Texas Sen. Ted Cruz responded with a thread of tweets in support of Trump's orders. He began by saying "the end of Qasem Soleimani is welcome and long-overdue justice."

Cruz also criticized former president Barrack Obama with a direct response to Rep. Ilhan Omar's, of Michigan, and former national security aide to Obama, Ben Rhodes' concerns of Trump possibly inciting a war after the strike.

Texas Rep. Dan Crenshaw reacted with a series of tweets in support of the strike. He began by writing "Tonight's a good night. Soleimani, the world's preeminent sponsor of terrorism, is now dead."

U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, of Texas, did not tweet out a response to the strike, but shared Cruz's and Crenshaw's responses on his page.

1/4 Republican Mark Yancey challenges John Cornyn in Senate primary by John Thomas [KXAN]

AUSTIN (Nexstar) — Sen. John Cornyn has support from President Donald Trump and the Republican Party establishment. He's the clear favorite in the March primary. But he still faces challengers for the nomination.

Dallas businessman Mark Yancey is one of four Republicans challenging Cornyn for the nomination. Yancey has spent 33 years in the private sector and says his business perspective would make him a good leader in Washington.

"I've created hundreds of well-paying jobs," Yancey said. "I want to take that same concept to Washington."

Yancey has no experience in government. He sees that as a good thing, saying the current system in Washington

is broken.

“It is so politically charged, nothing’s being accomplished up there, and we think John Cornyn is a big part of that,” Yancey said. “Something needs to change.”

1/3 Texas lawmakers react to US killing of top Iran general by Nicole Cobler [Austin American Statesman]

A spokesman for U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said he supports Trump’s decision and will address it Monday. U.S. Rep. Michael Cloud, R-Victoria, declined to comment. U.S. Rep. Bill Flores, R-Bryan, did not return a request for comment.

1/6 Cornyn’s effort gets rape-kit test funding back on track [Editorial] [Houston Chronicle]

When rape kits go untested, rapists go free. It’s a lesson sexual assault victims in Houston and cities across the country had to learn the hard way.

That’s why a recent bipartisan action by lawmakers in Austin and Washington, D.C. is so welcome.

The fitful battle to make sure that crucial DNA evidence is promptly and consistently tested in Texas rape investigations appears to be on firmer footing after President Donald Trump signed into law last Monday legislation that provides \$151 million to help states eliminate backlogs in rape kit testing.

The Debbie Smith Reauthorization Act of 2019, named for a Virginia woman whose 1989 rape was not solved until the evidence was finally tested five years later, also pays for DNA training and education programs essential to the proper gathering and processing of the evidence.

The White House action came seven months after Texas Gov. Greg Abbott signed the Lavinia Masters Act that requires law enforcement agencies to conduct an audit to determine the number of untested rape kits in the state and set definitive timelines for their analysis. The measure will provide more than \$50 million to eliminate the backlog in untested rape kits, and hire and train people to test them.

The Texas law is named for a Dallas woman who was raped at the age of 13. The evidence gathered by police then sat on a shelf for more than 20 years, meaning her attacker could never be prosecuted for the crime as the statute of limitations had run out. The new law would delay the statute of limitations for sexual assault and aggravated sexual assault cases until a rape kit is tested.

The legislation has been courageously pushed by the women whose stories so clearly point to the need for changes after unconscionable testing backlogs were exposed across the country, including in Texas and Houston.

Texas Republican Sen. John Cornyn, a co-sponsor of the Debbie Smith Reauthorization Act, said the funding had already helped the state reduce its testing backlog from about 20,000 in 2001 to an estimated 2,000 currently. The measure had been routinely renewed every five years since it was first enacted in 2004 but lapsed in September in a congressional tug-of-war.

The Democratic-controlled House included the funding in its rewrite of the Violence Against Women Act, a more comprehensive bill that includes a provision closing the so-called “boyfriend loophole” by barring anyone convicted of abusing or stalking a dating partner from owning guns. Opposed by the NRA, that legislation was never likely to pass the Republican-controlled Senate.

Cornyn and Sen. Dianne Feinstein, a California Democrat, crafted a stand-alone funding bill that passed the

Senate unanimously.

Although Congress needs to return to the Violence Against Women Act and especially the issue of guns in the hands of domestic abusers, Cornyn's move to extract the money for DNA testing and training from political gridlock was the right thing to do.

Peter Stout, CEO and president of the Houston Forensic Science Center, which gets about \$1 million to \$1.2 million a year from the Debbie Smith grants, had expressed concern that a delay or termination of the funds would hinder the advances the city has made since the Houston Police Department cleared a backlog of more than 6,600 untested rape kits in 2014. Some of those were from cases dating to the 1980s. Testing them led to 850 hits in the FBI's nationwide database of DNA profiles and dozens of charges in the first year alone.

Stout said last week that the restored funding and new law keep Texas better-positioned than many other states to deal with the testing, "but we can't become apathetic in getting to something that is sustainable."

The thousands of women like Debbie Smith and Lavinia Masters should have the assurance that their attackers will not be allowed to remain free to prey on others just because the evidence was never tested.

Cornyn Tweets/Retweets

1/6/2020 Amen QUOTE Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump IRAN WILL NEVER HAVE A NUCLEAR WEAPON!

1/6/2020 Former Senator Joe Lieberman: "President Trump's order to take out Qasem Soleimani was morally, constitutionally and strategically correct. It deserves more bipartisan support than the begrudging or negative reactions it has received thus far from my fellow Democrats" @WSJ LINK

1/6/2020 Amb. Ryan Crocker: "Was the killing of Maj. Gen. Qassim Suleimani, commander of Iran's elite Quds Force, an act of war? If it was, it was a war in which the United States and Iran were already joined": Long Battle With Iran LINK

1/6/2020 The 'Imminent' Distraction: Soleimani was waging war on the U.S. He could be targeted at any time. LINK

1/6/2020 Cornyn's effort gets rape-kit test funding back on track [Editorial] LINK

1/5/2020 Pompeo: "Endless Wars Are the Direct Result of Weakness" LINK

1/5/2020 Matt Whitlock @matt dizwhitlock "If ISIS started a streaming service you know you all would call your agents... So if you win an award tonight don't get up and give a political speech, you're in no place to do that. Most of you had less school than Greta Thunberg." -Ricky Gervais Whoa. #GoldenGlobes

1/5/2020 I have always admired Secretary Johnson's professionalism. QUOTE Zach Parkinson @AZachParkinson This morning, Obama DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson debunked Democrats' claim that Congress needed to approve Soleimani strike Johnson: Soleimani was a "lawful military objective" & the President had "ample domestic legal authority to take him out"

1/5/2020 Greg Abbott @GregAbbott_TX A new report shows the Texas economy remains robust going into 2020. "business conditions continue to improve and a majority of services firms expect stronger revenues in 2020" Thanks to Texas business owners & the best workforce in America. #txlege LINK

1/5/2020 Washington Examiner @dcexaminer "It is impossible to overstate the importance of this particular action. It is more significant than the killing of Osama bin Laden or even the death of Al-Baghdadi," Former Gen. David Petraeus said. LINK

1/5/2020 Bianca Nobilo @bianca_nobilo UK PM has spoken to Trump, Macron & Merkel and says in a statement: "Soleimani posed a threat to all our interests...we will not lament his death" and "I will be speaking to other leaders and our Iraqi friends to support peace and stability." Parliament to be updated Tuesday.

1/5/2020 John Bolton @AmbJohnBolton Another good day. Iran rips the mask off the idea it ever fully complied with the nuclear deal, or that it made a strategic decision to forswear nuclear weapons. Now, it's on to the real job: effectively preventing the ayatollahs from getting such a capability.

1/4/2020 Texas Farm Bureau @TexasFarmBureau Good #SundayMorning from rural Texas. Have a blessed day! PHOTO

1/4/2020 Democratic impeachment case collapses under weight of time LINK

1/4/2020 Kelly Loeffler @kloeffler I left the private sector to enter public service because the stakes have never been higher. I'm here to serve and help champion @realDonaldTrump's policies that have built a safer, stronger country. <http://ow.ly/BOYH50xNhvf> #gapol

1/4/2020 Dan Crenshaw @DanCrenshawTX #HoustonTexans what an incredible comeback. Unbelievable play by @deshaunwatson!

1/4/2020 Congrats to the @HoustonTexans for a great comeback playoff win. Way to go @deshaunwatson and @JJWatt leading the charge for the Texans.

1/4/2020 General David Petraeus: The former U.S. commander and CIA director says Iran's "very fragile" situation may limit its response. LINK "It is impossible to overstate the importance of this particular action. It is more significant than the killing of Osama bin Laden or even the death of [Islamic State leader Abu Bakr] al-Baghdadi. Suleimani was the architect and operational commander of the Iranian effort to solidify control of the so-called Shia crescent, stretching from Iran to Iraq through Syria into southern Lebanon. He is responsible for providing explosives, projectiles, and arms and other munitions that killed over 600 American soldiers and many more of our coalition and Iraqi partners just in Iraq, as well as in many other countries such as Syria. So his death is of enormous significance.

1/4/2020 General David Petraeus: The former U.S. commander and CIA director says Iran's "very fragile" situation may limit its response. LINK

1/4/2020 Inside the plot by Iran's Soleimani to attack U.S. forces in Iraq LINK

1/4/2020 "Soleimani was not "assassinated," as some Trump critics maintain. He was an enemy combatant commander who became a combat casualty because of a righteous responsive strike, conducted while he was in the act of levying war by directing his forces." QUOTE Senator John Cornyn @JohnCornyn Targeting Soleimani: Trump was justified, legally and strategically LINK

1/4/2020 Targeting Soleimani: Trump was justified, legally and strategically LINK

1/4/2020 Respectfully, "razor thin" does not belong in any legitimate intelligence assessment. See LINK Secondly, one should be wary of leaks of classified info. It is unlawful, and you have no way of assessing the knowledge, credibility, or agenda of the leaker. QUOTE Rukmini Callimachi @rcallimachi 1. I've had a chance to check in with sources, including two US officials who had intelligence briefings after the strike on Suleimani.

Here is what I've learned. According to them, the evidence suggesting there was to be an imminent attack on American targets is "razor thin".

1/4/2020 In ordering the death of Soleimani, Trump acted against a terrorist who killed hundreds of Americans. [LINK](#) I am much more inclined to trust the public assessment of the non-partisan Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who said there was clear evidence Soleimani was planning a "significant campaign of violence against the US in the coming days, weeks, and months. But in the end, you hardly need an intelligence assessment when Soleimani, himself, as the leader of a designated terrorist organization, the IRGC, threatened to escalate his multi-decade, bloody violence against Americans, our allies, and our interests in the region.

--

Anna Lee Hirschi
617.519.9731

From: Anna Lee Hirschi [annalee@mjfortexas.com]
Sent: 12/23/2019 12:28:17 PM
To: Anna Lee Hirschi [annalee@mjfortexas.com]
Subject: MJ Hegar Clips 12/23

Press Clips

12/20 A High-Profile Endorsement For MJ Hegar Has Opponents Crying Foul By Rhonda Fanning [Texas Standard/Texas Tribune]

A dozen Democrats are running for a chance to appear on the November ballot with Texas Sen. John Cornyn. One of them, MJ Hegar, got an early endorsement from the Democratic Senate Campaign Committee, or DSCC. That's the political organization charged with electing Democrats to the Senate.

"The move is pretty notable," Samuels says.

Some other Democrats running in the primary accuse the DSCC of snubbing diverse candidates; Hegar is a white woman. Several of the other candidates in the race are African American and Latino.

In the final hours before last week's deadline for candidates to file to run in their parties' primaries, prominent Houston lawyer and Beto O'Rourke advisor, Sima Ladjevardian, announced her candidacy for Congress. She's running as a Democrat for the seat currently held by Republican Dan Crenshaw. Ladjevardian joins two other Democrats in the primary.

Samuels reported Friday on a group called Women for Trump that's working to keep the Texas suburbs a GOP stronghold.

"There were about 50 women there," Samuels says, "and their goal was to spread the gospel of President Trump's message to these women, and encourage them to take their energy and encourage their friends to go out and vote for President Trump next year."

Samuels says Texas suburbs have been trending bluer, with several Democrats winning congressional seats away from Republicans in 2018.

12/20 Here's your Texas 2020 March primary ballot BY CARLA ASTUDILLO [Texas Tribune]

U.S. Senate

There's a big field of Democrats vying to unseat Republican incumbent John Cornyn, but will any of them be able to generate the hype that Beto O'Rourke did in his 2018 race against Ted Cruz? Cornyn is expected to cruise through his primary. A runoff is likely on the Democratic side.

Democrat CANDIDATES

DChris Bell
 DMichael Cooper
 DAminda K. Edwards
 DJack Daniel Foster Jr.
 DAnnie "Mama" Garcia
 DVictor Hugo Harris
 DMary "MJ" Hegar
 DSema Hernandez
 DD. R. Hunter

DAdrian Ocegueda
DCristina Tzintzún Ramirez
DRoyce West

Republican CANDIDATES
RVirgil Bierschwale
RJohn Anthony Castro
RJohn Cornyn Incumbent
RDwayne Stovall
RMark Yancey

MJ Hegar Tweets/Retweets

12/22/2019 Chag Sameach! Wishing joy, hope, and light to all celebrating Hanukkah!

12/22/2019 When I served, we didn't care about the sexual orientation of our crew members. We cared that everyone could do their jobs. #DontAskDontTell repeal was a critical step toward recognizing the humanity of folks in uniform. All LGBTQ+ service members & veterans deserve dignity.

12/20/2019 Two years after @JohnCornyn voted for the 2017 tax bill, what are the results? He handed corporate donors a HUGE tax break. They laid off employees, lined their pockets & thanked him with campaign \$. Texans still work multiple jobs to afford health care and feed our kids.

Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez Tweets/Retweets

12/22/2019 Wishing a happy #Hannukah to all those celebrating! #ChagSameach

12/22/2019 Blue America @Blue__America Senator John Cornyn is less popular in his home state of #Texas than "Zodiac Killer" Ted Cruz. @cristinafortx is running to take his #TXSen seat away from him because she believes our government should serve all of us. Not just the 1%. Help us #TurnTXBlue: LINK

12/21/2019 Another attack fueled by the politics of hate. Nicole Franklin admits she ran over a teenage girl because she believed she "was a Mexican." This was a hate crime. We must keep fighting for a country that accepts the humanity of all who call it home. LINK

12/21/2019 No surprises here. Make no mistake: this quote isn't out of context. For years the GOP has worked to suppress the vote in states like TX. In spite of their best efforts, we will vote in 2020 and demand that our government reflects the will of the people. LINK

12/21/2019 How do I know young people and Latinos are going to make history in 2020? Cuz we got Norteño stars organizing Latino voters at quinceañeras #2020 #poderquince QUOTE Antonio Arellano @AntonioArellano Adrián Zamarripa, the lead singer for Grammy nominated @Energia_Nortena is on team #PoderQuince! Gracias Adrián por ayudarnos a empoderar a nuestra comunidad latina en Texas! Visit <http://PoderQuince.com> to make your next quinceañera a voter registration hub!

12/21/2019 Fort Worth police officer Aaron Dean shot and killed Atatiana Jefferson in her own home over two months ago. Her murder is part of a larger pattern of police brutality in our country that disproportionately impacts black people. 1/3 This shooting came just after Amber Guyger was convicted of murdering Botham Jean in his apartment in Dallas in 2018. No one should live in fear that they will be killed at home by those tasked with their protection. 2/3 This indictment is an important step towards accountability and justice, but our work doesn't end here. We can't forget about Atatiana Jefferson and Botham Jean. We will continue working towards a future free from police brutality. 3/3

Amanda Edwards Tweets/Retweets

12/22/2019 Thanks to all of the AKAs, women (& men) who have been propelling me forward w/ their enthusiasm, time & resources this weekend! Together, we will harness our power & take this seat in order to work for the people! #AKA #service #sisterhood #gametime #LetsWork #womenforamanda PHOTOS

Cornyn Clips

12/20 BETO O'ROURKE'S SECOND ACT: FLIPPING TEXAS BY ERIC LUTZ [Vanity Fair]

The former 2020 launched a grassroots organization intended to turn the GOP stronghold blue.

Altogether, the announcement suggests a more behind-the-scenes post-campaign life for O'Rourke, who initially rose to prominence in part by streaming everything from dentist visits to free skates across Whataburger parking lots. The Beto show continued, naturally, on the campaign trail, where O'Rourke stood on various counters, criss-crossing the country to hear from a wide swath of voters. For some, his switch from frontman to stage manager is bound to be a disappointment. Just after he dropped out of the presidential race, some Democrats hoped he would make another Senate run, this time seeking to oust Trump ally John Cornyn. However, O'Rourke made clear in a Texas Tribune interview earlier this week that he had no plans to directly involve himself in the race, either as a candidate or through an endorsement. Instead, he said, he is turning his attention to the grassroots level, focusing on flipping the State house blue. "Everything flows up from that," he said.

12/20 U.S. lawmakers head home amid impasse over Trump impeachment trial by Andy Sullivan [Reuters]

[...]

"Hypocritical to argue this is a solemn constitutional duty and POTUS is an imminent threat to democracy and then sit on the articles. No one is fooled," Senator John Cornyn, the No. 2 Republican in the Senate, said on Twitter.

Democrats have argued that impeachment was an urgent matter because Trump represented a threat to democracy, particularly the integrity of the 2020 election.

[...]

12/20 Border Trade Alliance thanks U.S. House for passing USMCA By Steve Taylor [Rio Grande Guardian]

U.S. Senator John Cornyn of Texas is also pleased that USMCA includes reauthorization of the North American Development Bank.

"Investing in modern, efficient infrastructure along our border streamlines trade and benefits not only Texas, but the entire nation," Cornyn said.

"The North American Development Bank has a proven record of improving the quality of life on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border, and I'm glad the USMCA shows our commitment to strengthening it."

Earlier this year, Cornyn introduced the bipartisan North American Development Bank Improvement Act of 2019 to authorize the Treasury Department to increase its capital and provide additional authority to fund projects related to limited natural gas and land port of entry infrastructure.

12/20 O'Rourke announces next move, creates political group focused on helping Democrats in 2020 By

Mauricio Casillas [ABC/KVIA]

EL PASO, Texas -- Former El Paso Congressman and presidential candidate Beto O'Rourke has announced his next move.

In an email sent to his supporters, O'Rourke said he's creating a grassroots organization called Powered by People.

O'Rourke said the goal is to help Democrats win elections in Texas.

"It will give us a shot at picking up as many as 6 additional seats in the U.S. House of Representatives," O'Rourke wrote. "It will show the rest of Texas that we can finally replace John Cornyn, Trump's most reliable enabler, in the U.S. Senate."

O'Rourke said he will spend the next year organizing volunteers who will help register people to vote, knock on doors, and make phone calls.

O'Rourke cited his recent volunteer work with Eliz Markowitz, who's running for the state legislature, as his inspiration to create this group. Markowitz is in a run-off election to against Republican Gary Gates in the Fort Bend, Texas area.

[...]

12/20 COURTHOUSE DOGS ACT PASSED BY SENATE, ALLOWING EMOTIONAL ASSISTANCE ANIMALS TO CALM WITNESSES ON THE STAND BY MELISSA LEMIEUX [Newsweek]

Friday afternoon, the U.S. Senate passed Texas Senator John Cornyn's Courthouse Dogs Act, allowing comfort dogs into the courtroom to help upset witnesses testify.

The act clarifies the authority for judges to allow trained and certified emotional assistance animals into courtrooms.

"Testifying in court can be a stressful experience for many, and especially children who may be asked to recall traumatic memories," said Cornyn during a press conference. "By allowing trained dogs to sit with witnesses, we can ease stress, help witnesses feel safe to share their stories, and ultimately promote justice."

The bill was written after Cornyn visited the South Texas College of Law in Houston and spoke to certified handlers and victim support groups about the beneficial effect of support animals for testifying witnesses.

[...]

12/20 Mitch McConnell, Master of the Blockade, Plots Impeachment Strategy By Carl Hulse [New York Times]

[...]

Mr. McConnell held to his position on the court vacancy under tremendous pressure from Democrats. His Republican colleagues stuck with him and suffered little political damage, a result that might fortify them in the impeachment fight as well, making the outcome of the current stalemate difficult to predict.

"He usually gets pretty much where he wants to go," said Senator John Cornyn, Republican of Texas and a close ally of Mr. McConnell's. "And he's got very thick skin."

Trump to give annual address to Congress amid impeachment drama [BCC]

[...]

What did the letter say?

The letter sent by Mrs Pelosi on Friday begins with a pointed reminder to Mr Trump of the "separation of powers" enshrined in the US Constitution.

The three branches - the judicial, executive, and legislative - she said are "co-equal branches acting as checks on each other".

"In the spirit of respecting our Constitution, I invite you to deliver your State of the Union Address," she wrote, adding: "Thank you for your attention to this matter".

White House spokesman Hogan Gidley said that Mr Trump had accepted the invitation to speak.

A top Republican in congress, Texas Senator John Cornyn, reacted to the invitation with the hashtag "#somanymixedsignals".

"Guess she expects him to still be in office then," he tweeted.

12/21 Sen. John Cornyn discusses player safety, amateur athletics at high school football title By Thomas Jones [Austin American Statesman]

ARLINGTON — One knows it's the end of football season — and perhaps the start of election season — when a senator makes a trip to AT&T Stadium to catch some of the high school football state championship games.

But for Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas), the final day of the high school football season offered a rare chance for some boosterism. His daughters Danley and Haley graduated from Westlake in 1999 and 2001, respectively, and Cornyn expressed fond memories of their time in high school.

"It's a great community," Cornyn said a few minutes before tossing the coin for the first game of Saturday's triple-header. "We had a wonderful time (at Westlake), and I wish them the best today."

Cornyn, a U.S. senator since 2002, said his first trip to a high school football state championship game put the passion and commitment communities across Texas have for the sport into context. Twelve teams made the trip this past week to AT&T Stadium, the home of the Dallas Cowboys that set a record attendance for an NFL game with a crowd of 105,121 in 2009. Those teams ranged from six-man McLean from the Panhandle with a student enrollment of 58 to Class 6A powerhouse Galena Park North Shore east of Houston, which has a student enrollment of 4,754.

"What a great honor for them to achieve this level of success," Cornyn said. "Can you imagine walking into this stadium? You'd be awestruck."

Cornyn then referenced the classic basketball film "Hoosiers," where a small-town basketball coach in Indiana played by actor Gene Hackman tried to minimize the large arena that hosted the state tournament by measuring the height of the basket and the length of the court.

"That's got to be the challenge, I'd think, for the coaches and the players to realize that this is the same game but in an incredible venue like this, one of the wonders of the world," said Cornyn, who attended Holmes High

School in San Antonio before spending his senior year in Japan at an Air Force base high school. “There’s a reason ‘Friday Night Lights’ is an important book and movie and show, because football is the national sport of Texas.”

Cornyn also discussed what, if any, role Congress should play in a pair of issues that have risen to the forefront of amateur sports.

Increased player safety has been a priority in recent years at all levels of football, from the pros to pee-wee. While Cornyn expressed support for continued emphasis on rules to make the game safer, he also cautioned about the need for federal oversight.

“I would think we ought to let the school districts and the state take a shot at that,” he said. “Frankly, Congress doesn’t have any special expertise. But it’s a good thing to look at player safety because of the repetitive concussions and the long-term consequences. It’s controlled violence, and player safety needs to be at the top of the list (of priorities).”

Cornyn, who said he wrestled, ran track and competed in the shot put while in high school in Japan, also questioned the current movement to compensate amateur athletics at the collegiate level. In September, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law a bill that will make it easier for college athletes in his state to profit from their name, image and likeness. After initially opposing the California law, the NCAA reversed course in late October and expressed support for colleges to add rules allowing student-athletes to hire agents, sign endorsements and more.

While acknowledging that “somebody is going to make a lot of money at some point” on amateur sports, Cornyn said he believes “there’s a time and place for it.”

“I personally think amateur sports are a good thing,” Cornyn said. “I’m kind of skeptical of this idea of paying amateurs to compete. There ought to be a place where young men and women can compete because they love the game and the competition, and it isn’t all about the money.”

12/21 Senator John Cornyn: There’s two types of high school football — ‘There’s Texas and there’s everywhere else’ By Tommy Magelssen [Dallas Morning News]

ARLINGTON — U.S. Senator John Cornyn may have the support of all Texans on this take: there’s two types of high school football.

“There’s Texas and there’s everywhere else,” said Cornyn, who was at AT&T Stadium on Saturday for coin flips before the final high school football games of the season. “I just think the tradition here is so strong.”

Saturday, where crowds up to 50,000 were expected to watch the final three state championship games of the season, marked the second straight year a Texas politician helped kick things off.

Last year Duncanville graduate and governor Greg Abbott did the coin flipping in a Panthers letterman jacket.

Cornyn, who finished high school in Japan, didn’t play football in high school but said he wrestled and competed in track and field.

Ahead of the highly anticipated rematch between Galena Park North Shore and Duncanville, Cornyn played it down the middle and said he was fans of both involved, joking about his “political” response.

But as the father of Austin Westlake graduates, he said he was pulling for Westlake in Saturday’s Class 6A Division II nightcap against Denton Guyer.

"We're here to support all these young men who have worked so hard to get there, which is just incredible," Cornyn said ahead of the mid-day game. "Can you imagine walking into Cowboys stadium as a high school football player, what that must mean to them?"

12/22 Impeachment is bad politics, but it is imperative for our democracy By Ed Meier [Dallas Morning News]

[...]

With the House voting to impeach Trump and the process moving to the Senate, our Texas Sens. Ted Cruz and John Cornyn have two choices if they vote against conviction: deny the facts, or argue that while the president's behavior was bad, it wasn't impeachable. Both are dangerous.

Denying the facts feeds into Russian intelligence propaganda. Sen. Cruz began walking down this path during a Dec. 8 Meet the Press interview by asserting the false claim that Ukraine interfered in U.S. elections in 2016. All the U.S. intelligence agencies have said this is false. A Republican-led Senate investigation found no evidence of Ukrainian influence. And career national security official and Trump Russia advisor, Fiona Hill, called this false claim a "fictional narrative" propagated by the Russian security services.

[...]

12/23 Cornyn: Democrats are trying to change will of the people with impeachment posted by Cliff Saunders [KPRC Radio]

There seem to be a lot of polls coming out, and a lot of them have good news for President Trump, even if the mainstream media ignores them.

For example, new polling on impeachment show support for President Trump. Texas Senator John Cornyn told KTRH Democrats don't care about what the polls say, just like they don't care that 63 million of you voted for Trump back in 2016.

"It gives 535 members of Congress to essentially reverse the judgement of the 60 plus million voters that elected Trump in the first place. That's a pretty serious matter," Cornyn explained.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi hasn't delivered the impeachment articles to the Senate. And Cornyn says even after this is over, it won't really be over.

"Even if this impeachment thing is in the rear view mirror, there will be some other straw that opponents of the President will grasp at to try and justify his removal," Cornyn stated.

Polls have come out recently also showing Trump would do well against his Democratic challengers, and has more African American and Jewish support than you'd believe if you listened to CNN.

Cornyn also spoke with KTRH about the economy, and why Obamacare hasn't been replaced. You can listen to that interview below.

12/23 Body wash for state House Republicans, structure for Beto O'Rourke among gifts for Texas politicians By Gromer Jeffers Jr. [Dallas Morning News]

John Cornyn

Gift: A name tag

The Republican incumbent has served in the Senate since 2003 and he's been one of the most powerful Republicans in the upper chamber.

That's why it's odd that the senior senator, unlike the popular and notorious Cruz, is unknown to many Texas voters.

Cornyn watched as Cruz pulled out a narrow win against O'Rourke and vowed to be ready. He'll have lots of campaign cash, but he needs to define himself before Democrats cast him as merely a pawn for Trump.

12/23 Military voting overseas expected to be streamlined by Mitchell Ferman [The Monitor]

Members of the United States military are expected to have an easier time voting while deployed overseas, according to a bill that was signed into law on Friday.

U.S. Sen. John Cornyn announced the measure that he authored, the Military Voting Protection Act, which President Trump signed on Friday. The law is expected to ensure service members are provided with ballots and registration cards necessary to vote while deployed overseas, with instruction from trained personnel on how to cast their vote in their registered state.

The bill comes following a dip between the 2012 and 2016 elections in registration and participation for active duty service members voting, according to Cornyn's office, which said one third of those military members surveyed saying the absentee voting process was "too complicated."

"Soldiers, airmen, sailors, and marines regularly put their lives on the line to defend our democracy, and it's only right they have ample opportunity to fully participate in that democracy," Cornyn said. "This law will ensure that all service members' voices will be heard, regardless of whether they're donning the uniform at home or abroad."

While the new bill seeks to streamline the voting process, states could make it easier for deployed military members registered to vote there by implementing processes such as the one in Kentucky that was announced just this week.

The state of Kentucky announced the creation of an online portal for members of the military.

Cornyn Tweets/Retweets

12/22/2019 Jim Risch @SenatorRisch Two years on from tax reform and we've seen 4.6 million new jobs, a 50-year low unemployment rate, and the longest economic expansion in U.S. history. Tax reform is working for Americans.

12/22/2019 Brit Hume @brithume This is precisely what reporters should not be doing. They should report on political parties without fear or favor and leave it to readers and viewers to decide whether a party is "broken" or not.

12/22/2019 Wishing all Texans celebrating #Hanukkah a prosperous, safe, and blessed Festival of Lights.

12/22/2019 CBP @CBP Happy Holidays from the men and women of CBP!

12/22/2019 Call Adam Schiff and complain QUOTE Chuck Schumer @SenSchumer 91 minutes after President Trump's July 25 call: Michael Duffey sent an email ordering military assistance to Ukraine be withheld. If there

was ever an argument that we need Duffey and others to testify & we need the documents we requested—this is it.

12/22/2019 Greg Abbott @GregAbbott_TX While all eyes in Washington focused on impeachment the Senate continued to confirm more conservative judges to federal courts. These are judges who enforce the rule of law. Trump is transforming federal courts at a near record breaking pace.

12/22/2019 CDC confirms black market THC vaping products main source of deadly outbreak [LINK](#)

12/21/2019 There's nothing better than a day full of @UILTexas football. Good luck to both the teams playing in today's final championship game – @DentonGuyer_FB Wildcats vs the @WHSchaps Chaparrals!

12/21/2019 Senator John Cornyn: There's two types of high school football — 'There's Texas and there's everywhere else'

12/21/2019 Jerry was courageous in those early days before prison reform was generally accepted in Texas QUOTE Jerry Madden @jerrymadden Replying to @DrAlexPiquero @JohnCornyn and @dallasnewsAlex they took a lot of the ideas we had in our Texas legislation and applied them into this bill. @RightOnCrime

12/21/2019 Great meeting with Bishop Omar Jahwar, Founder & CEO of Urban Specialists, and learning more about his important work reducing violence and transforming lives & communities. #FirstStepAct

12/21/2019 And I'm back for the @Duncanville_Fb vs @NSNationFB game. Whether you're a Panthers or Mustangs fan, this should be a great game!

12/21/2019 Glenn Hegar @Glenn_Hegar Continued evidence that Texas is the place to be: Almost 86,000 Californians moved to Texas last year: [LINK](#)

12/21/2019 Incredible 45-42 game between Aledo and Fort Bend Marshall. Congratulations Aledo!

@MHS_Buffs

@BearcatsofAledo

@texashsfootball

□ #UILState

12/21/2019 President George H.W. Bush and his wife Barbara were both shining examples of what it looks like to put country first – and now their legacies will be memorialized for generations to come. [LINK](#)

12/21/2019 One year ago, Congress took the Texas model of successful prison reform nationwide. Thanks to the passage of my First Step Act, thousands of offenders will have the opportunity to participate in recidivism reduction programs to help them successfully reintegrate into society.

12/21/2019 Don't you think POTUS's lawyers will adequately represent their client? QUOTE Brian Schatz @brianschatz Don't you want to hear from people with direct knowledge who could exonerate the President?

12/21/2019 Don't you think POTUS's lawyers will adequately represent their client? QUOTE Brian Schatz @brianschatz Don't you want to hear from people with direct knowledge who could exonerate the President?

12/21/2019 #UILState QUOTE Senator John Cornyn @JohnCornyn Doing the coin toss for Aledo vs Fort Bend Marshall 5A Division II Championship game @MHS_Buffs @BearcatsofAledo @texashsfootball #nothingliketexahighschoolfootball

12/21/2019 Doing the coin toss for Aledo vs Fort Bend Marshall 5A Division II Championship game

@MHS_Buffs

@BearcatsofAledo

@texashsfootball

#nothingliketexashighschoolfootball

12/21/2019 Rep. Pete Olson @RepPeteOlson For 760 days, the #Citgo6 have been wrongfully imprisoned in Venezuela. We will #NeverGiveUp until they are reunited with their families in the USA!

@Citgo6C

@FreeCitgo6

@Vvadell

@aliriorafael8

@AZuvanich

@MariaElenaCard4

@carmen_molinos

12/21/2019 Let the parties, as with Clinton- the House impeachment managers, and the President's lawyers- try the case rather than have the Senate jury direct it. If we are not satisfied after their presentation, we can ask for more. QUOTE Brian Schatz @brianschatz "You know the facts pretty well. If there is any doubt, let's call witnesses and let's develop them fully, and leave no doubt on the table, and make sure that history will judge us well. Everybody will have a fair shot at proving their case." - Lindsey Graham, January 16, 1999

12/21/2019 Pandering: Biden willing to cut hundreds of thousands of oil and natural gas jobs LINK

12/21/2019 Bill McCarren @mccarrennews These Texas Senators also strong in their support of Administration efforts to free journalist, Marine veteran and 7th generation Texan Austin Tice, unjustly held in Syria since 2012.

@SenTedCruz

@JohnCornyn

@MarcATice

@PressClubDC

12/21/2019 CBP @CBP Just 2 months into FY2020, CBP officers and Border Patrol agents have seized more than 13,000lbs of cocaine, 547lbs of fentanyl, 27,000lbs of meth and 1,100lbs of heroin nationwide. Learn more: <http://bit.ly/33Aba4C>

12/21/2019 Afghanistan is not Vietnam LINK

12/21/2019 FBI Director Christopher Wray ordered more than 40 changes in how the bureau seeks secret surveillance warrants and handles other matters after a Justice Department report uncovered flaws in monitoring a former Trump campaign adviser LINK

12/21/2019 Courthouse dogs act passed by Senate, allowing emotional assistance animals to calm witnesses on the stand LINK

12/21/2019 Cornyn's Bill to streamline Military Voting Overseas to become Law today LINK

12/21/2019 Why did Robert Mueller not tell America about the Steele dossier? LINK

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Anna Lee Hirschi

617.519.9731

From: Anna Lee Hirschi [annalee@mjfortexas.com]
Sent: 12/20/2019 10:31:30 AM
To: Anna Lee Hirschi [annalee@mjfortexas.com]
Subject: MJ Hegar Clips 12/20

Press Clips

12/19 NATIONAL DEMOCRATS HAVE ENDORSED THREE FORMER REPUBLICANS IN KEY SENATE RACES by Akela Lacy [The Intercept]

SENATE DEMOCRATS' CAMPAIGN arm has endorsed three former Republicans, adding to a list of races in which the party has continued a futile strategy of backing moderates over candidates with more progressive platforms.

The latest endorsement came on Monday, when the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee put its weight behind M.J. Hegar, who voted in the 2016 Republican primary, in the race to replace Sen. John Cornn, R-Texas. The other former Republicans backed by the DSCC are Mark Kelly, who voted as a Republican as recently as 2012 and is now running for an Arizona Senate seat, and Barbara Bollier, who became a Democrat last year and is running in Kansas.

Democrats need to win at least four additional seats — or three seats, and the presidency — in order to take back a majority in the Senate. Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, who has had trouble recruiting candidates, said he's focused on eight races, including at least four states where the DSCC has already made endorsements: Arizona, Colorado, North Carolina, and Texas. In some of those states, national Democrats have overlooked popular progressive candidates who say the committee is unfairly playing favorites in races and taking away voters' ability to make their own choices. By toeing the line between Republicans and Democrats, the DSCC is continuing a broader party strategy of backing away from — and in some cases, trying to intimidate — progressives in favor of more moderate centrists that has been repeatedly shown not to work, costing them several races.

"We're proud to support candidates who are running strong campaigns and can win their races," DSCC spokesperson Lauren Passalacqua said in a statement to The Intercept. "Unlike their Republican opponents, these candidates will do what's right for their states and fight for taking action against climate change, making health care more affordable, and getting big money out of politics."

Hegar, who has only recently committed to the Democratic Party, in her 2018 campaign was noticeably contradictory on gun policy, though in recent months she's expressed support for stricter gun control laws. One of her opponents, longtime Texas organizer Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez, raised \$459,000 in the third quarter to Hegar's \$1 million, though she is slightly ahead of Hegar in a November poll from the University of Texas at Tyler. Tzintzún Ramirez has spoken out against the DSCC's recruitment policy, calling it "tone-deaf."

Kelly, meanwhile, will likely win the Democratic primary and face Republican Sen. Martha McSally in a special election next year. As recently as 2012, he voted in the Republican presidential primary in Texas, the Arizona Republic reported. Kelly then voted for Barack Obama in the general election. He changed his voter registration from "not declared" to Democrat in December of last year.

The DSCC endorsed Bollier, a Kansas state senator who became a Democrat just last year. She officially entered the Senate race in October and was endorsed by the DSCC that same month. Before switching parties, she served as a Republican for seven years in the state legislature — six as a representative, one as a senator. Bollier is seeking to replace Republican Sen. Pat Roberts, who announced in January that he wouldn't be seeking reelection. Usha Reddi and Nancy Boyda are among other candidates running in the Democratic

primary. Former U.S. Attorney Barry Grissom was the top Democratic fundraiser with \$468,000 before he dropped out in October and endorsed Bollier.

IN OTHER SENATE races, national Democrats are backing conservative Democratic candidates over viable progressives. In Kentucky, for example, the party has coalesced around Marine fighter pilot Amy McGrath, a centrist who lost a winnable 2018 House race and stands little chance of unseating Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. State Rep. Charles Booker is running to her left.

In North Carolina, the DSCC has endorsed commercial litigation attorney, former state senator, and military veteran Cal Cunningham to replace Republican Sen. Thom Tillis, who is one of the least popular senators in the country. The committee has backed Cunningham even though state Sen. Erica Smith, a progressive, has led both Cunningham and Tillis in polling — as recently as November. Cunningham has far outraised Smith, with \$1.7 million — including \$200,000 of his own money — to her \$133,000, including \$4,500 of her own money. Cunningham has had significant fundraising help from donors linked to Schumer.

Cunningham served in the North Carolina legislature from 2001 to 2003. During his 2000 campaign, he received an A rating from the NRA, and he later took several positions that aligned him with the gun lobby. Cunningham has recently supported stricter gun control measures, including universal background checks, which Smith also supports, and his campaign spokesperson Rachel Petri said in his current campaign, he's "been clear in his support for passing background checks and banning high-capacity magazines that turn guns into weapons of war." Smith, who's been in office since 2015, has a record of support from unions, as well as pro-choice, environmental, and good governance groups.

In Colorado, the DSCC endorsed former Gov. John Hickenlooper almost immediately after he dropped out of the presidential race to run in the Democratic primary to face Republican Sen. Cory Gardner next year. He's a self-described friend of business interests, and has said he supports "universal healthcare" but not Medicare for All. Hickenlooper once drank fracking fluid to try to prove that fracking wasn't all that bad. At the time of Hickenlooper's entry into the race, former state House Speaker Andrew Romanoff was a top contender, and he's raised \$1.4 million so far. He's called the DSCC strategy a "recipe for disaster." The DSCC pressured consultants not to work with Romanoff before they endorsed Hickenlooper, The Intercept reported in August.

Critics say the DSCC strategy closely mimics that of its counterparts in the House, where the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee is refusing to work with vendors contracting with primary candidates challenging incumbents. While the DSCC endorses former Republicans over more progressive candidates, the DCCC continues to give a significant amount of business to firms working with Republican candidates, The Intercept reported this week. Last year, the DCCC backed Rep. Jeff Van Drew, who has supported restrictions on abortion, received a 100 percent rating from the NRA, and has been vocal against impeachment, over potentially viable progressive candidates including former Cory Booker staffer Will Cunningham and retired teacher Tanzie Youngblood. Van Drew is expected to switch to the Republican Party later this week.

12/19 African-American Dem Slams DSCC for Tipping the Scales to White Candidates by Cameron Cawthorne [The Washington Free Beacon]

The chairman of the Texas Coalition of Black Democrats alleged racial bias played a part in the Democratic Senate Campaign Committee's (DSCC) recent endorsement of Texas Senate candidate MJ Hegar.

Carroll Robinson, who was recently elected to be the chairman of the group, said the "disrespectful" endorsement of Hegar on Monday "certainly won't help her when the DSCC looks like it's trying to rig [the primary] for her."

"I think the party still has this antiquated perspective that somehow the white candidate will get white voters and the white candidate will get them to victory," he said. "They're assuming [Hegar will] do better than Wendy

Davis, than Hillary Clinton did in Texas, and better than Beto O'Rourke did."

David Rutz breaks down the most important news about the enemies of freedom, here and around the world, in this comprehensive morning newsletter.

Hegar is running against several candidates of color, including state senator Royce West, who called the DSCC's endorsement of Hegar a "slap in the face."

"The DSCC is trying to lock African Americans out of the process," West said.

The DSCC isn't the only Democratic committee that has faced accusations of racism. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) was criticized over the summer for a lack of diversity.

"There is not one person of color — black or brown, that I'm aware of — at any position of authority or decision-making in the DCCC," said Rep. Marcia Fudge (D., Ohio), a former chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus. "It is shocking, it is shocking, and something needs to be done about it."

The complaints resulted in multiple white DCCC senior staffers resigning.

MJ Hegar Tweets/Retweets

12/19/2019 "When Diana thinks back on the night her mother died... she still gets angry — 'because instead of wanting to feel better, she was more worried about the cost.'" Moms and babies are dying in Texas because they can't afford care. That's unacceptable.

Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez Tweets/Retweets

12/19/2019 Disability rights are human rights. Trans rights are human rights. #DemDebate

12/19/2019 Graduating with an average of 27K in debt, Texan students know that student debt is our next economic crisis if we fail to act. We must cancel student debt for millions of Americans and support efforts to make public universities and community college tuition-free. #DemDebate

12/19/2019 Agreed. I recently visited a tent city in Matamoros where #asylumseekers from Latin America are waiting for months on end in horrible conditions for their asylum hearings in the US. The #DemDebate must address this humanitarian crisis created by the Trump Administration. QUOTE Julio Ricardo Varela @julito77 This debate is taking place in Los Angeles area, the US county with the largest Latino population in the country. 50% of the county is Latino. You would think 1-2 questions about #Mexico #CentralAmerica and/or #LatinAmerica would happen now. you would think. #DemDebate

12/19/2019 One of the amazing immigrants they make our state stronger #InternationalMigrantsDay Antonio Arellano @AntonioArellano I migrated to the United States almost 26 years ago at the age of three. Today, I am honored to serve as the interim executive director of the largest Latino progressive organization in Texas. Migrants are powerful and proud. #InternationalMigrantsDay PHOTO

12/19/2019 Antonio Arellano @AntonioArellano I migrated to the United States almost 26 years ago at the age of three. Today, I am honored to serve as the interim executive director of the largest Latino progressive organization in Texas. Migrants are powerful and proud. #InternationalMigrantsDay PHOTO

12/19/2019 I'm running what we're calling a "Modern Mom" campaign. I've worked hard to balance campaigning for U.S. Senate with the full-time job of being a mom. I'm doing this to create a better future for my son and for all of our kids. Help us keep up the fight: LINK

Cornyn Clips

12/19 Mark Yancey to run against Sen. Cornyn in March Texas primary by Christa Wood [East Texas Matters]

WICHITA FALLS (KFDX) — Mark Yancey announced that he will be running against Sen. John Cornyn for US Senator in the March primary.

Yancey feels Texas is a model for economic and political success, and he would carry that model to Washington.

Yancey calls himself:

“a Reagan Republican, who is fiscally conservative, in favor of limited government, a strong military that embraces a ‘needs-based military spending metric’ and supportive of strong free trade and economic development.”

As a veteran of the financial services industry, Yancey has helped build four successful investment management firms, which in turn, created hundreds of well-paying jobs.

Yancey is from Dallas and is currently the Chairman and CEO of Attacca International, an independent, privately held mergers and acquisitions boutique firm based in Dallas.

“Given the many challenges that America currently faces, this is the right time for a business leader to serve Texas and the country, rather than a career politician,” Yancey said. “Senator Cornyn has little support from conservatives across Texas. Senator Cornyn has frequently disappointed Texans with his strong alignment with both Mitch McConnell and Trump. He has shown repeatedly that he is a follower and a compromiser on the wrong side of an issue rather than a leader. Conservative Texans deserve better! I ask for your support and your vote.”

Yancey currently serves on the board of Emily’s Place in Plano, Texas. Emily’s Place is a home for women and their children to receive long-term, transformational care to break the cycle of domestic violence.

He is also a board member of the Blue Sky Foundation, which uses the game of tennis (through the “Boots On The Court” program) to thank U.S. troops and their families for the sacrifices they make on a daily basis.

Yancey earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of Oklahoma and attended executive classes at Harvard University for advanced course studies in mergers and acquisitions.

12/19 Ted Cruz criticizes GOP leadership for \$1.4 trillion spending package, calling it a ‘pile of trash’ By Tom Benning [Dallas Morning News]

WASHINGTON – Texas Sen. Ted Cruz is ripping a \$1.4 trillion spending package as a “piece of garbage,” criticizing his Republican leadership in the Senate for striking a deal “in the dark of the night” on legislation that had to be passed this week to avert a government shutdown.

“This pile of trash belongs in an ashtray,” he said in a six-minute video posted late Wednesday to Twitter, lighting up a cigar and then stubbing it out on the 2,300-page bill.

The GOP-run Senate on Thursday voted 71-23 to approve the part of the spending package covering domestic agencies, with Cruz and Texas Sen. John Cornyn among those voting against it. The chamber then voted 81-11 on the national security portion, with Cornyn voting yes and Cruz voting no.

The Democrat-run House passed the bills Tuesday. President Donald Trump is expected to sign the legislation

ahead of a Friday evening deadline.

But the legislation's massive reach has not found universal favor.

Cruz, in a vintage rant, criticized the package for excessive spending, saying that "Christmas came early in Washington for lobbyists." He also railed against several major policy provisions, including \$1.4 billion in border wall funding that he deemed insufficient.

"How much does it come short?" he said. "Well, President Trump asked for \$8.6 billion to fund the wall. Does it give \$8 billion? Does it give \$7 billion? Does it give 6, 5, 4, 3, 2? No, it gives \$1.4 billion. It doesn't come close to fully funding the wall.

Some Texas Republicans in the House also complained that funding for Trump's wall along the U.S.-Mexico border was not enough. But many Democrats in Texas and beyond fumed that the legislation included any funding for the barrier, much less money with few strings attached.

The divide shows how Trump's signature campaign promise continues to create tension in Congress, with Republicans hailing the barrier as a critical national security tool and Democrats bemoaning it as a harmful waste of money.

Consider the response this week from the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, which is led by Rep. Joaquin Castro, D-San Antonio.

"This spending bill is effectively a blank check that will allow the administration to continue redirecting billions from real national security priorities to instead inflict cruelty and militarize our border," the group said.

But Cruz's complaints about the spending package were hardly limited to the border wall.

"2,313 pages dropped on us the day before yesterday — nobody has read it," he said, before referring to Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. "It was put together in the dark of the night with Republican leadership and Chuck Schumer cutting a deal."

Cornyn, Cruz's fellow Texas Republican, offered a similar critique in explaining his opposition to the part of the spending bill related to domestic agencies.

"Rather than having an open debate and votes on spending, as we had planned, the process fell to just a handful of people negotiating behind closed doors," he said. "This is reminiscent of the smoke-filled back room deals Congress has long been criticized for."

But Cruz, in particular, has something of a history of clashing with GOP leadership over spending bills. In 2013, he helped cause a 16-day government shutdown in an effort to defund the Affordable Care Act, though he continues to blame Democrats for that episode.

His opposition this time around didn't produce a similar result. But his objections are no less pointed.

Cruz blasted reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank of the United States as "one of the greatest corporate boondoggles." He said \$25 million for research on gun violence would fund "bogus studies that are going to be used to try to take away your constitutional rights."

One of his most stinging critiques of the spending package came over a provision to raise the legal age to 21 for purchasing tobacco products.

“Now our soldiers at age 18, you can be drafted to go into war, you can be sent to the front lines, you can face machine gunfire,” he said, stopping to puff on his cigar. “But God help you if you want a smoke.”

12/19 Senate Passes \$1.37 Trillion Omnibus Spending Deal, Leaves for Christmas Recess by BRAD JOHNSON [The Texan]

Today the Senate approved the package of appropriations bills the House passed on Tuesday. The bill’s passage prevents a second partial government shutdown in as many years.

The final vote for the defense-focused portion of the omnibus (with some non-defense appropriations attached) was 81-11 with only four Republicans voting in opposition. The final vote for the non-defense portion of the omnibus was 71-23.

Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX) voted for the defense-focused portion of the omnibus and against the non-defense portion, while Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) voted against both measures.

Sen. Cruz called the overall bill a “\$1.4 trillion spending monstrosity [that] plunges our nation even further into debt.”

He continued, stating, “This ridiculous, rushed, end-of-year spending process, year after year, is an example of government of the lobbyists, by the lobbyists, and for the lobbyists.”

Sen. Cornyn has not yet put out a statement on the vote.

The bill will now be sent to President Trump’s desk where he is expected to sign it. White House spokeswoman Kellyanne Conway told reporters, “The president is poised to sign it to keep the government open.”

Last year, the government partially shut down over the lack of desired border funding from Congress.

At that time, Trump said he’d “never sign [an omnibus bill] again.” This time around, Congress only approved \$1.375 billion in border funding when the President requested \$8.6 billion.

According to the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, the omnibus will add nearly \$500 billion to the national debt over the next decade.

Earlier this year, Congress approved a deal to bust previous spending caps set by the Budget Control Act of 2011 by \$323 billion — effectively undoing the most significant legislative accomplishment of the Tea Party movement.

This omnibus is an appropriations deal, dictating where to send the money approved earlier this year.

The national debt has risen nearly \$5 billion since the House passed the omnibus earlier this week.

12/19 Fort Hood: Texas senators request briefings on military housing issues [KWTX/AP]

FORT HOOD, Texas (KWTX) U.S. Sens. Ted Cruz and John Cornyn, R-Texas, sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper to request a briefing on the current initiatives to improve military housing.

This request is in response to complaints of mold, lead and a failure to address maintenance requests at Joint Base San Antonio and Fort Hood.

Town hall meetings have been conducted throughout the year at which residents voiced their concerns with the

state of their homes.

Some families even developed health issues, forcing them to relocate every few months.

The letter noted that Congress passed the National Defense Authorization Act for the 2020 fiscal year, which includes provisions to establish a tenant bill of rights, a standardized assessment tool for housing evaluating such risks as lead and mold, and guidelines for a dispute resolution process.

Esper has not officially responded to the letter yet.

12/19 House passes bipartisan USMCA, in ‘win for Texas’ by James Osborne [San Antonio Express News]

WASHINGTON - A revised North American trade deal passed the House Thursday, as Democrats and Republicans came together on an agreement that not only maintains U.S. trade with Canada and Mexico, but attempts to bring manufacturing jobs back to the United States and improve labor conditions across the continent.

After months of contentious negotiations between Democrats and the White House, the trade pact that President Donald Trump named the United States Mexico Canada Agreement passed 385-41, marking a victory for Texas and other border states, which count on trade with Mexico for a substantial portion of their economies.

“This agreement will increase market access for U.S. farmers, strengthen intellectual property rights, provide strong labor and environment obligations, and create thousands of American jobs,” said Rep. Henry Cuellar, D-Laredo, who helped negotiate provisions that provide \$250 million for the San Antonio-based North American Development Bank and \$300 million to fund Environmental Protection Agency grants for border communities.

The North American Development Bank, created in 1993, has helped finance 63 Texas projects with a combined value of more than \$1.7 billion, said Republican Sen. John Cornyn.

“The North American Development Bank has a proven record of improving the quality of life on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border, and I’m glad the USMCA shows our commitment to strengthening it,” Cornyn said.

[...]

12/19 Impeachment news roundup: Dec. 19 [Roll Call]

Impeachment Games: Sen. John Cornyn said that House Democrats are “playing games” that signal their impeachment effort wasn’t a serious undertaking.

“Either she thinks she has leverage, which he does not have, or she’s undermining her own message about the seriousness of this proceeding,” he said. He called the idea that Pelosi would withhold the articles pending “some kind of accommodation” by the Senate “ridiculous.”

12/18 DEMOCRATS STRIKE “SOLEMN” TONE DURING IMPEACHMENT MARATHON AT THE CAPITOL By CBS News [CBS]

[...]

House and Senate Democrats have railed against Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell for saying he would not be an “impartial juror” and for his coordination with the White House. Some in the House have argued Pelosi should withhold the articles from the Senate until McConnell agrees to fairer proceedings, although it’s

unclear what leverage Democrats would hope to gain by delaying a trial Republicans don't want to hold in the first place.

"We don't care whether they never come," Republican Senator John Cornyn told reporters Wednesday.

House Democrats insisted it's their constitutional duty to impeach Mr. Trump, no matter what the Senate does. All but two of the 31 Democrats who represent districts won by Mr. Trump in 2016 Republican seats in 2018 supported impeachment, putting their 2020 reelection prospects at risk, they said, because they consider it their constitutional duty.

[...]

12/19 Pelosi Hints at Delaying Senate Trial; McConnell Says 'I'm in No Hurry' By Ed Kilgore [The Intelligencer]

But the second question is whether McConnell would rise to the bait and sit down with Chuck Schumer to devise a full and "fair" Senate impeachment trial. And the initial, mocking, reaction of Senate Republicans suggests they'd just as soon call Pelosi's bluff and let hell freeze over before holding a trial at all, as reported in The Hill:

Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas), an adviser to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), called talk of the tactic "one of the dumbest things I've ever heard of."

"Are they threatening to withhold the articles of impeachment?" he told The Hill. "That doesn't accomplish their intended goal. That just means we won't be having a trial."

McConnell, asked by a Washington Examiner reporter about a potential delay, similarly shrugged it off, saying, "I'm in no hurry."

12/19 GOP panicking Trump will blow up their impeachment defense by tweeting during Senate trial: report By Tom Boggioni [Raw Story]

According to a report from Politico, Senate Republicans would prefer Donald Trump stop tweeting during his upcoming impeachment trial, saying it will make their job clearing him much more difficult.

More to the point, Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) suggested, "Tweet less, smile more."

"Senate Republicans, who loathe the president's tweeting, are hoping that when impeachment comes to the Senate, Trump will do something out of character: Stay quiet," the report states with Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX) telling reporters on Wednesday, "This is a solemn and serious undertaking and I just think we don't need a bunch of distractions. The president will like the outcome, I believe, in the end. So ... making it easier not harder would be a good thing."

According to the report, "Trump has not exactly hid his feelings about the House impeachment proceedings, often tweeting that it's 'phony' and a 'hoax.' The president even posted tweets attacking several witnesses who testified during the House's impeachment inquiry. And if he continues the barrage during his impeachment trial in the Senate, it could derail the Senate GOP's strategy, annoy undecided senators and end up hurting his efforts to win unanimous acquittal from the Republican Party."

Embattled Maine Sen. Susan Collins (R) whose own re-election seems uncertain, added her own words of caution to the president, saying, "The president would be best served by letting his lawyers speak for him and not doing any comment," before adding a blunt, "At all."

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC), who is expected to lead Trump's defense on the Senate floor, also spoke to the media in an attempt to get through to Trump.

"He needs to be respectful of the process," Graham stated. "He can defend himself, he has a right to express his grievances but if I were him I would ... keep a low profile."

With Democratic Senator Chris Murphy (CT) adding, "'Trump makes everything less serious. He's successful in turning everything into entertainment and a reality show ... certainly the way in which he's approaching this ends up taking some of the solemnity away from what is normally a pretty serious process," another Republican concurred.

"There [are] many cases in which I hope he doesn't tweet," lamented John Thune (R-SD).

12/20 Encryption lets sexual predators escape the law [Opinion] By Ryan Patrick [Houston Chronicle]
[...]

Warrant-proof encryption in turn provides a lawless space, one in which criminals, terrorists and other bad actors can exploit society's most vulnerable individuals for nefarious ends. And social media platforms and tech companies are, frustratingly, refusing to develop tools that would allow law enforcement to access electronic evidence, even when investigators have secured a warrant or court order.

On Dec. 10, the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on this vital issue. A bipartisan group of senators expressed outrage at the tech industry's persistent refusal to productively respond to public concerns about - and the perils created by - warrant-proof encryption. As Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said, "I don't believe any company ought to be able to unilaterally decide whether to cooperate with law enforcement. It's up to a court ultimately, and being a nation of laws we need to follow - everybody needs to follow - lawful court orders."

12/19 U.S. Senator John Cornyn Receives Tri Global Energy's 2019 Wind Leadership Award by Tri Global Energy [PRNewswire]

Tri Global Energy today announced that U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) has been awarded the company's 2019 Wind Leadership Award for his support and recognition of wind energy in Texas and nationally.

"Wind power is a growing force of energy in Texas," said John Billingsley, Chairman and CEO of Tri Global Energy. "We are grateful for Senator Cornyn's leadership and support as we shape a new energy landscape to benefit all citizens."

Tri Global Energy's Wind Leadership Award is presented annually to a member of the U.S. Congress who has provided significant recognition to wind energy development.

Cornyn Tweets/Retweets

12/20/2019 There is no reason to set rules for the trial unless and until the articles have been sent to the Senate. #MerryChristmas QUOTE Sarah Ferris @sarahnferris NEW: Pelosi says she won't name impeachment managers until there's a "fair trial" in Senate -- essentially holding up the process. "So far we haven't seen anything that looks fair to us," Pelosi said, without detailing exact demands. "But right now, the president is impeached."

12/20/2019 Mrs. Pelosi is also potentially complicating life for Democrats from competitive districts who backed the impeachment effort and are now hoping to quickly move on. @WSJ QUOTE Senator John Cornyn @JohnCornyn There is no reason to set rules for the trial unless and until the articles have been sent to the Senate. #MerryChristmas

12/20/2019 Inspector General Horowitz, as you know, is undertaking an audit to see whether this is an isolated case or whether it is systemic. One concern is if the FBI can do this to a presidential candidate and POTUS, what chance do regular folks have against such an abuse of power? QUOTE Steve Vladeck @steve_vladeck Except that we know of multiple prior episodes, across multiple administrations, when the government wasn't fully candid with the #FISA Court. It seems to me that putting more teeth into the process (and into the court) is an obvious way to reduce the chances of that recurring.

12/20/2019 Happy to entertain ideas. But this is mainly a case of intentional deception of the Court and failure to follow current rules. Changing the rules may or may not stop that. We need personal accountability for the offenders to deter similar actions in the future. QUOTE Jake Tapper @jaketapper Replying to @JohnCornynDo you think, Senator, that it should be reformed? And if so, what reforms? Thx

12/20/2019 FISA was abused. But that's no reason to end it

12/19/2019 North American Development Bank @NADB_BDAN Thank you Sen. @JohnCornyn for your support 2 include #NADB in #USMCA. 260 environmental projects financed improving lives of over 17+m #USMX border residents. @cmateos

12/19/2019 Senate Cloakroom @SenateCloakroom The Senate has adjourned for the 116th Congress, 1st Session. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from the Senate Republican Cloakroom!

12/19/2019 Sahil Kapur @sahilkapur The Senate confirmed 13 new judges this week. Donald Trump has now picked 185 judges: —133 district court judges —50 circuit court judges —2 Supreme Court justices That's more than 1/5th of the federal bench. The new batch fits the trend: young conservatives, mostly 40s/50s.

12/19/2019 Durham Is Scrutinizing Ex-C.I.A. Director's Role in Russian Interference Findings LINK

12/19/2019 CBP @CBP Starting today, Mexican nationals who attempt to cross the border illegally may be repatriated into the interior of Mexico. This reduces the likelihood of repeat attempts and further restores integrity into our immigration system.

12/19/2019 Fort Hood: Texas senators request briefings on military housing issues LINK

12/19/2019 There is no reason to set rules for the trial unless and until the articles have been sent to the Senate. #MerryChristmas QUOTE Sarah Ferris @sarahnferris NEW: Pelosi says she won't name impeachment managers until there's a "fair trial" in Senate -- essentially holding up the process. "So far we haven't seen anything that looks fair to us," Pelosi said, without detailing exact demands. "But right now, the president is impeached."

12/19/2019 How unserious is that? Oh, well. We'll just confirm more federal judges, maybe take up USMCA, and pass a highway/infrastructure bill while the Speaker dawdles. QUOTE Chad Pergram @ChadPergram Hoyer announces no more votes until January 7. Big cheer goes up in House chamber. This means the House won't approve a resolution on impeachment mgrs & to send impeachment pkg to Senate until at least January, 2020

12/19/2019 Senator Ted Cruz @SenTedCruz Today @JohnCornyn & I sent a letter to @SecPompeo to urge the @StateDept to do everything it can to ensure the safe release and return of the #CITGO6 executives currently under house arrest in #Venezuela.

12/19/2019 Senate Republicans @SenateGOP "Mr. President, it looks like the prosecutors are getting cold feet."

12/19/2019 Texas Farm Bureau @TexasFarmBureau #USMCA has passed the U.S. House and delivers a win for agriculture! Read more from @TexasFarmBureau President @RBoening: [LINK](#)

12/19/2019 Done QUOTE Chad Pergram @ChadPergram Senate locks in deal to confirm 11 judges, with vote sequence starting at 4 pm et

12/19/2019 Perfectly QUOTE Ryan Petty @rpetty This clears it all up.

12/19/2019 Retired Orrin G. Hatch @RetiredOrrin Speaker Pelosi: We are holding the articles of impeachment in the House for a while. @senatemajldr: Ok, we have some great ideas to pass the time: QUOTE Senate Cloakroom @SenateCloakroom Votes Scheduled: At 1:45 pm, the Senate will proceed to up to 12 votes on the following: 1. Confirmation of Exec. Cal. #465 Anuraag Singhal to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Florida

--

Anna Lee Hirschi
617.519.9731

From: Jenny Aranda [jaranda@azdem.org]
Sent: 12/20/2019 10:25:57 AM
Subject: 191220 MK4S Clips
Attachments: 191220 MK4S CLips.docx

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KELLY NEWS

National Democrats Have Endorsed Three Former Republicans In Key Senate Races (The Intercept)

Akela Lacey

SENATE DEMOCRATS' CAMPAIGN arm has endorsed three former Republicans, adding to a list of races in which the party has continued a futile strategy of backing moderates over candidates with more progressive platforms.

The latest endorsement came on Monday, when the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee put its weight behind M.J. Hegar, who voted in the 2016 Republican primary, in the race to replace Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas. The other former Republicans backed by the DSCC are Mark Kelly, who voted as a Republican as recently as 2012 and is now running for an Arizona Senate seat, and Barbara Bollier, who became a Democrat last year and is running in Kansas.

Democrats need to win at least four additional seats — or three seats, and the presidency — in order to take back a majority in the Senate. Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, who has had trouble recruiting candidates, said he's focused on eight races, including at least four states where the DSCC has already made endorsements: Arizona, Colorado, North Carolina, and Texas. In some of those states, national Democrats have overlooked popular progressive candidates who say the committee is unfairly playing favorites in races and taking away voters' ability to make their own choices. By toeing the line between Republicans and Democrats, the DSCC is continuing a broader party strategy of backing away from — and in some cases, trying to intimidate — progressives in favor of more moderate centrists that has been repeatedly shown not to work, costing them several races.

"We're proud to support candidates who are running strong campaigns and can win their races," DSCC spokesperson Lauren Passalacqua said in a statement to The Intercept. "Unlike their Republican opponents, these candidates will do what's right for their states and fight for taking action against climate change, making health care more affordable, and getting big money out of politics."

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Hegar, who has only recently committed to the Democratic Party, in her 2018 campaign was noticeably contradictory on gun policy, though in recent months she's expressed support for stricter gun control laws. One of her opponents, longtime Texas organizer Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez, raised \$459,000 in the third quarter to Hegar's \$1 million, though she is slightly ahead of Hegar in a November poll from the University of Texas at Tyler. Tzintzún Ramirez has spoken out against the DSCC's recruitment policy, calling it "tone-deaf."

Kelly, meanwhile, will likely win the Democratic primary and face Republican Sen. Martha McSally in a special election next year. As recently as 2012, he voted in the Republican presidential primary in Texas, the Arizona Republic reported. Kelly then voted for Barack Obama in the general election. He changed his voter registration from "not declared" to Democrat in December of last year.

The DSCC endorsed Bollier, a Kansas state senator who became a Democrat just last year. She officially entered the Senate race in October and was endorsed by the DSCC that same month. Before switching parties, she served as a Republican for seven years in the state legislature — six as a representative, one as a senator. Bollier is seeking to replace Republican Sen. Pat Roberts, who announced in January that he wouldn't be seeking reelection. Usha Reddi and Nancy Boyda are among other candidates running in the Democratic primary. Former U.S. Attorney Barry Grissom was the top Democratic fundraiser with \$468,000 before he dropped out in October and endorsed Bollier.

IN OTHER SENATE races, national Democrats are backing conservative Democratic candidates over viable progressives. In Kentucky, for example, the party has coalesced around Marine fighter pilot Amy McGrath, a centrist who lost a winnable 2018 House race and stands little chance of unseating Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. State Rep. Charles Booker is running to her left.

In North Carolina, the DSCC has endorsed commercial litigation attorney, former state senator, and military veteran Cal Cunningham to replace Republican Sen. Thom Tillis, who is one of the least popular senators in the country. The committee has backed Cunningham even though state Sen. Erica Smith, a progressive, has led both Cunningham and Tillis in polling — as recently as November. Cunningham has far outraised Smith, with \$1.7 million — including \$200,000 of his own money — to her \$133,000, including \$4,500 of her own money. Cunningham has had significant fundraising help from donors linked to Schumer.

Cunningham served in the North Carolina legislature from 2001 to 2003. During his 2000 campaign, he received an A rating from the NRA, and he later took several positions that aligned him with the gun lobby. Cunningham has recently

supported stricter gun control measures, including universal background checks, which Smith also supports, and his campaign spokesperson Rachel Petri said in his current campaign, he's "been clear in his support for passing background checks and banning high-capacity magazines that turn guns into weapons of war." Smith, who's been in office since 2015, has a record of support from unions, as well as pro-choice, environmental, and good governance groups.

In Colorado, the DSCC endorsed former Gov. John Hickenlooper almost immediately after he dropped out of the presidential race to run in the Democratic primary to face Republican Sen. Cory Gardner next year. He's a self-described friend of business interests, and has said he supports "universal healthcare" but not Medicare for All. Hickenlooper once drank fracking fluid to try to prove that fracking wasn't all that bad. At the time of Hickenlooper's entry into the race, former state House Speaker Andrew Romanoff was a top contender, and he's raised \$1.4 million so far. He's called the DSCC strategy a "recipe for disaster." The DSCC pressured consultants not to work with Romanoff before they endorsed Hickenlooper, The Intercept reported in August.

Critics say the DSCC strategy closely mimics that of its counterparts in the House, where the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee is refusing to work with vendors contracting with primary candidates challenging incumbents. While the DSCC endorses former Republicans over more progressive candidates, the DCCC continues to give a significant amount of business to firms working with Republican candidates, The Intercept reported this week. Last year, the DCCC backed Rep. Jeff Van Drew, who has supported restrictions on abortion, received a 100 percent rating from the NRA, and has been vocal against impeachment, over potentially viable progressive candidates including former Cory Booker staffer Will Cunningham and retired teacher Tanzie Youngblood. Van Drew is expected to switch to the Republican Party later this week.

Funding for Ft. Huachuca project diverted for border wall not included in defense spending bill (KGUN)

Sam Radwany

Funding for a Ft. Huachuca project that was diverted to build a wall at the U.S.-Mexico border was not included in a defense spending package passed by Congress this week.

The planned ground transport equipment building was scheduled to receive \$30 million to begin construction next year. But in February, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to divert military funding to pay for the wall after Congress refused to pay for it.

Sen. Martha McSally says the Ft. Huachuca project was already stalled for "unforeseen environmental issues at the construction site," and that she's received assurances the project will be funded in the next fiscal year.

RELATED: Pentagon notifies states that will be impacted by diverted funds for border wall

"The Senate voted in a landslide bipartisan way (86 – 8) to fund affected military construction projects in this year's defense bill," McSally said in a statement Thursday. "Now, Democrats are refusing to fully fund these military construction projects due to political games around border security. Shame on them."

Democratic Senate candidate Mark Kelly, who is running against McSally in 2020, says McSally has made the project's future uncertain.

"Senator McSally made promises she couldn't keep and put funding for Arizona's military bases on the chopping block, instead of putting our state first," Kelly said in a statement released Tuesday.

The spending bill does include hundreds of millions of federal dollars for bases across Arizona, including \$132 million for the A-10 based at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson.

RADIO: Coverage of McSally recording, McSally on impeachment and what could happen, mention of Kelly as a strong opponents (KJZZ)

Democrats Pressure GOP Senators Over Unfunded Military Projects (Wall Street Journal)

Gabriel Rubin

MILITARY PROJECTS whose funding was diverted this year under President Trump's national emergency declaration to build a border wall will not be built next year either, after Democrats refused to backfill funding in year-end spending bills. Democrats are eager to highlight projects that lost funding in states and districts represented by vulnerable Republicans. Top targets include Colorado Sen. Cory Gardner, whose state lost millions in funding for Colorado Springs' Peterson Air Force Base, and Sen. Martha McSally, whose state lost \$30 million for a southern Arizona Army base.

Democrats have hit them hard for not opposing Trump's emergency declaration, and the lack of backfilling leaves Republicans without a definitive answer on when, or if, those projects will get funded. "Democrats are refusing to fully fund these military construction projects due to political games around border security," McSally said in a statement. Gardner didn't respond to requests for comment.

The backfilling was a key administration justification for transferring the funds: the projects were merely delayed, not canceled. Democrats aim to make such transfers less palatable to the White House. The projects include base improvements in both the U.S. and overseas. The fund transfer itself is caught up in legal purgatory, frozen by federal judges. The administration has promised to appeal those rulings.

Still, Democrats were unable to get their desired restrictions on fund transfers included during conference negotiations with Senate Republican appropriators. Other Democrats are furious the appropriations package included \$1.375 billion in border wall funding.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

Which do you think will be the most competitive Senate races in 2020? Join the conversation below.

WISCONSIN DEMOCRATS plan extensive voter outreach effort after judge orders more than 200,000 voters purged from the rolls. The registrations were nullified after the voters didn't respond within 30 days to letters seeking to confirm their addresses. Democrats view the decision as an attempt to suppress the votes of Democratic voters like college students and urban renters who tend to move more frequently. Republicans dismiss that concern and note that the judge decided to follow the letter of the law aimed at preventing people from voting in multiple locations.

"It's possible to organize your way out of a purge," said Wisconsin Democratic Party Chairman Ben Wikler in an interview. Once the party has a list of purged voters, it plans to use all manner of methods to reach them and get them to register during early-voting periods or election day in coming primary and statewide judicial elections. Wisconsin has same-day registration, meaning voters with identification and proof of address can be added to the rolls at a polling place.

RENEWABLE ENERGY industry gets slammed in year-end tax deal. Tax credits for solar weren't extended at their current level of 30%, and will drop four percentage points in 2020, followed by a similar drop in 2021 and a steep drop to 10% in 2022 just for commercial and utility installations. Democrats failed to push through a package that would have extended credits on solar, wind, electric vehicles and homeowner energy-efficiency upgrades.

Meanwhile, as part of the year-end spending bill, Congress allocated an extra \$10 million for a total of \$750 million towards "technologies to advance coal, natural gas, oil, and other fossil fuel resources." The White House lobbied hard against renewable energy credits, and efforts by House Democrats, environmental groups and renewable energy trade groups failed to break through.

INSURANCE COMPANIES cheer as Congress loosens rules on annuities in retirement accounts. The measure takes away an employer's responsibility to choose the lowest-cost plans for their employees' 401(k) plans. That opens the door for insurance-company annuities to be included in far more retirement plans than currently. MetLife, Principal Financial and the American Council of Life Insurers were among those taking a victory lap following the measure's inclusion in the package.

LUXURY CONDOS with "Trump" branding typically sell for 20% more than comparable units, according to an analysis by real estate broker Redfin Corp. But that's down eight percentage points from before he was elected president, with particularly large price drops in Democratic-leaning areas like Chicago. The analysis didn't look at Trump-branded properties in New York, where some data for Trump property transactions wasn't available.

TRUMP ENTERS 2020 in a hole with voters that's significantly deeper than what President Obama faced in 2012. Thirty-four percent of voters say they're certain to vote for Trump, with 48% certain to vote against him, according to a new Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll. Eighteen percent say it depends who the Democratic nominee is. At the same point in Obama's re-election bid, he had 34% certain to vote for him, too, but 37% certain to vote against him.

Trump's Support Heading into 2020

Source: WSJ/NBC News survey of 900 adults, Dec.14-17; margin of error +/- 3.27 percentage points

%

Certain to Support

Certain to Vote Against

Depends on Nominee

0

10

20

30

40

50

60

NO SMOKING: The House votes to make a smoking ban on Amtrak trains federal law. The bill includes e-cigarettes, following a similar clarification of federal law banning the smoking of e-cigarettes on airplanes last year. Sen. Tom Carper, of Amtrak-loving Delaware, has companion legislation pending in the Senate.

MINOR MEMOS: Vegan group promises \$1 million for veterans if Trump gives up animal products for a month.... Former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn, who faces sentencing by a federal judge in January, cheers on his niece, Miss Rhode Island, at Miss America competition.... Mike Pence drops by a German restaurant and a Christmas superstore as impeachment debate rages in Congress.

Nation awaits next step in impeachment process (WV Metro News)

Mike Nolting

U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has yet to commit to when she will forward the two articles of impeachment against President Donald Trump to the U.S. Senate for a trial.

The House voted along party lines Wednesday night to impeach Trump. All three House members from West Virginia voted against both measures.

Fairmont State University Assistant Professor for Political Science Greg Noone said Thursday Pelosi may be holding out to see if the leadership of the Senate will concede on a few issues.

"There was a poll that 71 percent of Americans want to see a trial with witnesses and I think that's what they're hanging their hat on," Noone said during a Thursday appearance on MetroNews "Talkline." "That they can get those couple of Republican senators to side with Democrats for a trial with witnesses. Otherwise, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has already signaled that he will not be impartial."

Noone said Republican Senators Cory Gardner from Colorado, Linda Collins from Maine, Martha McSally from Arizona and Lisa Murkowski from Alaska are potential targets for the Democrats.

Noone said it takes just 51 votes to establish rules for the trial, while 67 votes are needed for a conviction.

MetroNews

@WVMetroNews

Greg Noone, @FairmontState Professor Political Science, talks with @DaveWilsonMN about impeachment and how the view of its usage has changed in America. WATCH: <http://wvmetronews.com/channel/>

Embedded video

2

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Noone said the impeachment process has once again shown the polarized environment of today. He said his students want facts and most of their parents get news from sites that confirm their beliefs. He said the result is students are left searching for facts from the internet and alternative media outlets.

Noone said past political practices have resulted in an environment of tribalism.

"The system at-large is broken and it's broken because of gerrymandering, it's broken because of unlimited money," Noone said. "That's what's creating this hyper-partisanship."

Noone said in 1994 when the Republicans won the U.S. house then speaker Newt Gingrich ended the practice of families relocating to Washington D.C. with elected leaders. He said those family relationships, outside the halls of Congress, helped keep debate civil. Shortly after, he says the Clinton impeachment drove another wedge between the two parties.

Noone also said the internet has played a major role in pitting one side against the other.

"The confluence of these events has led to it," Noone said. "Between Bill Clinton, Newt Gingrich and the internet it's really the beginning of all this."

He said most people aren't willing to listen to the opposing view in many cases.

"So, it's an echo chamber of validation that goes on and it entrenches people more into their positions. Unfortunately, a lot of these positions are not based on fact, they're based on their gut, how they feel," he said.

After impeachment split, Arizona's members of Congress agree on USMCA trade deal (Arizona Republic)

Ronald Hansen, Russ Wiles

A day after the rancorous, party-line vote to impeach President Donald Trump, Arizona's House delegation came together to unanimously vote in favor of Trump's revised trade deal with Mexico and Canada.

The 385-41 House vote on the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement on Thursday leaves the deal pending in the Senate, which isn't expected to take it up until after Trump's impeachment trial is over early in 2020. All nine of Arizona's House members voted for the measure.

The USMCA deal, sometimes called NAFTA 2.0, would effectively replace the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement. Its passage in the House represents a political victory for Trump, and a model of rare, cross-party collaboration with Democrats.

The deal's advocates, including many in Arizona's congressional delegation, expect it will further bolster trade with the state's No. 1 trade partner, Mexico.

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Among its key provisions, the deal would require the production of a greater share of auto parts in North America to avoid tariffs, provide expanded protection of intellectual property across the continent, make it easier for Mexicans to form labor unions and help dairy farmers gain wider access to markets in all three countries.

Arizona's delegation, like those in other border states, eventually backed the measure that Trump negotiated in November 2018, and that House Democrats modified throughout recent months. The final product won the rare support of the AFL-CIO.

"When (House Speaker Nancy Pelosi) and I agree on an issue, there's something there," said Rep. Paul Gosar, R-Ariz., who is one of the most conservative members of the House.

Even while supporting the measure, Gosar noted his concern that it provides "broad legal immunity to Big Tech, who use it as a shield from accountability."

Rep. Greg Stanton, D-Ariz., said the USMCA is of special value to Arizona, which has outsize trade of all types with Mexico.

"Those of us in border states understand the value of trading with our neighbors," Stanton said. "I can tell you, growing trade relations with Mexico and Canada is essential to Arizona, and this new agreement will offer a big lift to our local companies. Already in Arizona nearly 230,000 jobs rely on across-the-border commerce."

Rep. David Schweikert, R-Ariz., maintained that the deal builds on the corporate tax changes enacted in 2017 that made the U.S. more competitive internationally, and can help prolong the current economic growth.

"I wish we could have done this a year ago, but we're finally getting it done," he said. "We're living almost in a miracle of economic growth and economic stability. This just actually adds one more leg that we can keep this going."

Rep. Tom O'Halleran, D-Ariz., praised the deal, saying the "final agreement is a triumph for hardworking families, our Arizona agriculture producers, businesses of all sizes, and rural communities that are too often overlooked."

U.S. Sen. Martha McSally, R-Ariz., welcomed the deal's passage in the House and said, "I can't wait to vote yes" to it in the Senate.

Arizona business groups applaud passage
Arizona business leaders applauded the deal's passage in the House.

Glenn Hamer, president and CEO of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said Arizona's economy will benefit.

"From e-commerce to agribusiness to our emerging automotive sector, all segments of the Arizona economy win under this agreement," he said in a statement.

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Trade with North American partners Mexico and Canada helps support 228,000 jobs in Arizona, Hamer added.

Allison Gilbreath, executive director of the Arizona Manufacturers Council, said the group is "thrilled" with the House's action.

"The North American manufacturing supply chain is so deeply integrated across borders that maintaining tariff-free trade was essential to ensuring and enhancing the sector's competitiveness," she said in a statement.

Indivisible activists focus impeachment heat on GOP senators in swing states (San Francisco Chronicle)

Joe Garofall

Indivisible was one of the left-leaning groups that organized more than 600 pro-impeachment rallies nationwide this week before the House impeached President Trump.

So now what for Indivisible, which has an estimated 2 million members nationally in roughly 5,000 chapters, including 200 in the Bay Area? Those groups aren't slowing down, even though the GOP-led Senate is unlikely to remove Trump from office — if House Speaker Nancy Pelosi decides to send the case to the Senate for a trial.

The Senate is what Indivisible is focusing on now: It's going to target vulnerable Republican senators up for re-election in 2020.

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The GOP senators have already heard from the activists. Since the impeachment hearings started, Indivisible members have made 600,000 calls to senators in states where Democrats have hopes of flipping seats, “urging them to stand up on impeachment.” Indivisible chapters run autonomously, so they are free to campaign against the senators in their own way.

“Impeachment is the right thing to do because Trump has committed impeachable crimes,” Indivisible co-founder Ezra Levin said on The Chronicle’s “It’s All Political” podcast. “But, politically, if we’re just talking about the political impact here, (Trump’s approval ratings are) underwater in Iowa, Colorado, Arizona, North Carolina, Montana and Alaska.”

Those states have something in common: Each has a Republican senator facing re-election.

But defeating those Republican senators will be tough — although Trump is indeed underwater in them, he’s only barely below the surface in some, according to an ongoing Morning Consult poll. And incumbents tend to start with a built-in advantage.

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Two of the senators up for re-election in Indivisible’s target states — Alaska Sen. Dan Sullivan and Montana Sen. Steve Daines — are holding “solid Republican” seats, according to the nonpartisan Cook Political Report. Iowa Sen. Joni Ernst is a “likely Republican” win, Cook figures, and North Carolina Sen. Thom Tillis is in the slightly more vulnerable “lean Republican” classification. The others — Colorado Sen. Cory Gardner, Maine Sen. Susan Collins and Arizona Sen. Martha McSally — are running in toss-up states.

“These Republican senators are going to be faced with a choice: Either shield this unpopular president as they’re asking for votes from their constituents, or they can vote to convict and demobilize their (Trump-sympathetic) base,” Levin said. “That is a choice I think that these Republican senators should have to face,” Levin said. “And I think it helps those of us combatting Trump that they have to face that choice.”

But how will it affect Democratic voters in those states if those senators back Trump with little hesitation?

“It energizes those people in Iowa and North Carolina and Maine — they would love to see those Republican senators stand up,” Levin said. “But if they don’t, they will march all the way to November to ensure that they aren’t senators in 2021.”

That said, Indivisible’s expectations are muted for the Senate impeachment trial — if and when that happens.

“We’re not expecting (Senate Majority Leader) Mitch McConnell to offer a fair and transparent trial,” said Leah Greenberg, Indivisible’s co-founder and co-author with Levin, her husband, of the book “We Are Indivisible: A Blueprint for Democracy After Trump.”

“People aren’t expecting the Senate trial is going to be some magical moment when we actually get him out of office,” Greenberg said. “But they are expecting that it’s a moment when Republicans either have to be brave or reveal who they really are.”

Newly passed spending bill includes \$152-million for San Luis Port of Entry (KYMA)

Lisa Sturgis, Brandon Mejia

Measure also includes \$1.4-million for border wall construction

WASHINGTON, D.C. (KYMA, KSWT, KECY) - The Senate on Thursday passed a \$1.4-trillion spending package that includes more than \$150-million to revamp the San Luis Port of Entry.

Arizona Senator Martha McSally shared the news with KYMA.com just hours after the measure cleared.

"So this is a really big win, and we advocated for it throughout the entire process, and it will now be going to the President's desk." McSally told us.

McSally says the funding, and the project, will have great benefit to people on both sides of the border.

"As you know, that cross-border commerce every single day is for jobs in Southern Arizona and is really important for the local community, and it's important for border security," she said.

McSally says the San Luis Port is one of only three federally-funded projects approved under the new legislation. She says it is the only port in the country to receive money for extensive improvements.

The House has already cleared the spending measure. President Trump is expected to sign it Friday.

Absurd 'hold the impeachment articles' scheme doomed to fail (Washington Examiner)

Jay Caruso

The House of Representatives impeached President Trump, and at long last, some Democratic members of the House and plenty of progressive activists got what they've wanted since January 2017.

Naturally, however, that's not enough. With removal from office as likely as there being a faraway world with munchkins, yellow brick roads, and flying monkeys, Trump, not Vice President Mike Pence, will serve as president until at least January 2021.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said there was almost zero chance Trump gets removed, and Sen. Lindsey Graham said he would vote to acquit Trump. As such, some are all agog, saying, "How dare you, sir?" They want House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to engage in one last desperate scheme: not sending the articles of impeachment to the Senate.

Latching on to this odd idea are the likes of Harvard Law Professor Laurence Tribe, Democratic superstar Michael Avenatti, former Florida lobbyist and congressman David Jolly, former Breitbart flack Kurt Bardella, and others. The idea is that holding onto the articles to demand that McConnell commit to an "open and fair trial" will put pressure on senators in swing states facing reelection in 2020 to follow suit. That list includes Sens. Susan Collins of Maine, Cory Gardner of Colorado, and Martha McSally of Arizona, to name a few.

The only thing missing from this idea is the scheduling of the clown-shoe fitting for those advocating for this desperation move.

Play Video

The major problem in this latest scheme to get Trump out of office is that the House has no say over how the Senate conducts an impeachment trial. If McConnell wants to pay homage to the O.J. Simpson trial and have the Dancing Itos perform for everyone and serve as witnesses, he can do that. The revered Constitution gives the Senate "sole power to try all impeachments." That means it's McConnell's gig.

When Republicans offered up complaints about the House impeachment process, the chorus of "Deal with it!" echoed from the halls of Congress to the television studios of CNN and MSNBC and the newsrooms of the Washington Post and the New York Times.

What goes around comes around, I suppose.

I've said many times, both publicly and in private, that public opinion would have to shift in a significant way for there to be a chance to get a simple majority in the Senate to vote for removal, let alone the requisite two-thirds majority. That figure would have to be 66% or higher. As it stands, the RealClearPolitics polling for impeachment and removal is at 47%, with those opposing at 48%.

It won't make much of a difference because once again, the commentariat and other insiders don't get that people aren't sitting around saying, "Well, Cory Gardner won't put pressure on Mitch McConnell to offer up a fair impeachment trial, so I am definitely voting against him!"

If reverence for the Constitution and the oath senators take are so sacrosanct, perhaps they should reach out to some Democrats, including Democratic presidential candidates Elizabeth Warren, Amy Klobuchar, and Michael Bennett. All have implied they'd vote to convict Trump even before the impeachment articles passed the House.

The "hold the articles" gambit is a terrific example of Washington insider nonsense that is a nonstarter in the hinterlands or even the suburbs. The idea will fail, and McConnell will sit back smiling and think of Napoleon Bonaparte, who said, "Never interrupt your enemy when he is making a mistake."

Jim Jones: Idaho voters can help stop Russian interference in U.S. elections (Magic Valley)

Jim Jones

Idaho voters are uniquely positioned to influence Congressional passage of a bill to stop Russia from trying to corrupt our elections. The bipartisan Defending Elections from Threats by Establishing Redlines (DETER) Act would impose serious economic sanctions against Russia for election interference. The sanctions would be substantially stronger than those presently in place.

The DETER Act requires the Director of National Intelligence to determine, within 60 days after a federal election, whether a foreign government interfered. If so, sanctions would be imposed against the offending government.

If Russia was the government responsible for the election attack, tough sanctions would automatically be imposed against a wide array of Russian individuals and entities within 30 days of the DNI's finding. Several of the largest Russian banks would be cut off from the U.S. financial system. Russian entities in the energy, defense and government sectors would have any property within U.S. control blocked or frozen so they could not do business with it. The sanctions would remain in place for at least 8 years.

These automatic, long-lasting sanctions would have a strong deterrent effect on the Russians, making them think more than twice before meddling into our elections again. The bill is co-sponsored by six Republican Senators and five Democrats.

The bill is currently awaiting action in both houses of Congress. The Senate version, S. 1060, is in the Senate Banking Committee. Sen. Mike Crapo is chairman of the committee, so Idaho voters can have a strong say in whether the bill moves forward. Sen. Jim Risch is chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a member of the Republican-led Senate Intelligence Committee. The Intel Committee released a sobering report on Oct. 8, warning that sweeping new action is necessary to protect our elections. Sen. Risch obviously knows how important S. 1060 is in safeguarding the integrity of our election process.

Sen. Crapo halted Senate consideration of the bill on Dec. 10, asserting it should be reviewed by his committee. That may be fair, but he claimed the bill was "more to attack the Trump administration and Republicans than to attack the Russians." If that is true, it is odd that the bill has more Republican sponsors than Democrats. Republican Sen. Martha McSally, an Air Force combat veteran, signed on as the latest sponsor on Sept. 23.

Crapo also said, "economic sanctions legislation is a two-edged sword. It hurts the United States and our allies often as much as it hurts the entities sanctioned." It is hard to see how stiff sanctions on the Russians for trying to pervert our elections could hurt the U.S. or our allies. We and our allies have already imposed sanctions on Russia for a wide range of aggressive misconduct. It is a significant sore spot for the Russian president because of the adverse impact on Russia's economy. We just need to squeeze him harder until he stops attacking us.

President Trump has imposed sanctions against Iran, North Korea, Venezuela, Russia, Syria, Turkey and any number of other countries. He has threatened them against many others, including Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. It is doubtful that sanctions would be his weapon of choice if they harmed our interests.

Idaho voters can and should let our two influential Senators know that we expect them to use their best efforts to get S. 1060 to the Senate floor for a vote well before next year's election. Our intelligence agencies report that the Russians are

already interfering and we must have a much stronger deterrent to discourage them. Our precious representative form of government is under attack and we should employ every means available to defend it. Let's let Sens. Crapo and Risch know we expect them to work hard for passage of this important legislation.

Jewish-Latino Teen Coalition to celebrate quinceañera (Arizona Jewish Post)

Debe Campbell

Over its 15-year history, the Jewish-Latino Teen Coalition has changed the lives of 176 teens from Southern Arizona's Jewish and Latino communities. The nationally recognized youth leadership program fosters political advocacy and cultural awareness in both the Tucson community and the nation. The group will celebrate its 15th anniversary with a quinceañera party next month and honor its founders Paul Baker and Humberto Lopez.

The coalition was born after a fact-finding tour of the two communities by local lay and agency leaders and Arizona Rep. Raul Grijalva, recalls Shari Gootter, a local therapist and the group's passionate volunteer leader for the past 13 years. Lew Hamburger, Ph.D., has been at her side for the past nine years. The group's overriding concern was about children and the future. Local businessmen and philanthropists Baker and Lopez committed to funding the coalition for three years, Gootter says.

Today, JLTC is funded by the Jewish Federation of Southern Arizona through the support of private donors and a grant from the Jewish Community Foundation. "It's a unique program — the only Jewish-Latino teen program of its kind on a national level," says JFSA President and CEO Stuart Mellan. "It's been important in grooming a new generation of civic-minded activists, and it's been a wonderful vehicle for fostering friendships and understanding in our local Jewish and Latino communities."

"We celebrated the 10th anniversary and the 13th year with a b'nai mitzvah," says Gootter. "The quinceañera is to celebrate Baker and Lopez. When I asked them if we could honor them in this way, instead of just saying yes, these busy and humble individuals turned around and offered to sponsor the event. There aren't words to express the value of their continuing commitment to changing the lives of so many kids. This took their dedication and philanthropy to a new level."

Competitive applications open each fall. After rigorous interviews, a selection committee builds a diverse, multi-gendered, multi-ethnic group that commits to months of education and weekly workshops, growing knowledge and skills for advocacy and leadership. JLTC launched its 16th cohort on Dec. 15 with a family dinner and cultural exchange. This year's participants come from seven different high schools.

"They learn to discuss, disagree, understand, work together, and share openly and honestly. It's an experience of self-reflection, exploration and learning more about themselves through the group. My favorite thing to watch is the kids start out one way and end up another," Gootter says of the process. "The kids are changed in so many different ways, sometimes you just don't know how."

As the teens explore, they select a compelling policy issue. Then, local leaders engage them in workshop dialogues "to educate them on that issue, along with how to advocate and lobby policymakers," Gootter says. Last year's focus was on immigration issues. Students were able to volunteer in local shelters to interact with migrants and get a first-hand view of the issue.

"One of our students, who could speak personally on the subject of immigration as her parents had been deported, spoke at a pre-immigration rally conference," says Gootter. "The conference happened to take place in the building where Martin Luther King drafted the Civil Rights Act and was attended by over a hundred people, in large part rabbis and clergy."

Four months of weekly learning culminates in a trip to Washington to employ lobbying skills in the offices of senators and congressmen on Capitol Hill. "One year we had the very special opportunity to be escorted to Sen. John McCain's secret hideaway in the Capitol. The students all met, spoke with, and enjoyed meeting McCain," says Gootter.

Last year was the students' most robust Capitol Hill tour, Gootter said. They had one-on-one visits with Reps. Grijalva, Pramila Jayapal, Ann Kirkpatrick, Dan Crenshaw, Sharice Davids, and Sens. Martha McSally, Kyrsten Sinema, Lindsey Graham, Tammy Duckworth, Cory Booker, and Catherine Cortez Masto. JLTC alum Andrea Kippur hosted a dinner for the group.

Lisa Kondrat was a member of JLTC's first cohort in 2004-5. After university, she returned to Tucson and is on the administrative team at The Gregory School. "I had quite a few leadership opportunities in high school but JLTC was impactful enough that 10 years later I wanted to get involved again," she says. Kondrat has been a JLTC program and logistics coordinator and trainer for the past nine years. "I go to the weekly workshops, schedule the D.C. meetings and

work closely with Shari.” There are a million things that made her want to come back to the program, she says. “The essence is the impact opportunity it provides for students, but more often it just has to be experienced, to see it is to believe it. To watch a group of 10-12 strangers in the fall culminate into a bonded, cohesive group, going from shy kids to a machine that works for the common good.”

Peris Lopez was a member of the 14th cohort. She now is majoring in culture and politics in her first year at Georgetown University. Attending school in Washington was “nowhere in my mind before JLTC,” she says. Lopez was an intern/mentor for the group last year. “My group has a deep place in my heart. They are some of the closest friendships I’ve ever created. JLTC became everything for me, it became an avenue where I could actually make a difference,” she told the AJP. She found mentoring empowering and enlightening. “It was cool to watch their growth in personal relationships and passion for advocacy.” Lopez looks forward to meeting group 16 in D.C. next year “to see what they are passionate about. It’s so incredible to see how it inspires them. I am so grateful for the JLTC experience.”

“We never know how one experience will change our path,” says Gootter. “I am so grateful to so many people who make it possible year after year.”

The free quinceañera celebration is Sunday, Jan. 5 from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Harvey and Deanna Evenchik Center for Jewish Philanthropy, 3718 E. River Road. There will be hors d’oeuvres, margaritas, mariachis, and klezmer music. Reservations are required by Monday, Dec. 30 at www.jfsa.org/JLAT.

Letters to the editor (Arizona Daily Star)

McSally should honor her juror’s oath

Senators will soon be swearing a special juror’s oath to conduct impeachment hearings impartially. I contacted Martha McSally’s office to ask whether the senator plans to honor her juror’s oath and her Senate oath to protect the Constitution by calling for impartial hearings and testimony from witnesses who have information about the Ukraine issue.

Since Sen. Mitch McConnell has already made it clear he would not honor his, I was interested whether McSally would honor hers. Her staff responded that she “has no position statement” on whether she will honor her oath. This is a curious response to a fundamental “process” question, since congressional Republicans have been entirely focused on process, not substance, on this issue. Yet they won’t commit to honoring their sworn oaths?

That’s dereliction of duty, plain and simple. And the public should know about it.

Jeff Anderson

Foothills

Backing for anti-doping racing bill in US reaches crucial milestone (Horse Talk)

The patchwork quilt of racing jurisdictions across the United States may soon be under uniform anti-doping regulations, after support for a House bill garnered a crucial majority of co-sponsors.

The Horseracing Integrity Act of 2019 would create a national anti-doping authority that would be independent of existing racing regulators.

The legislation now exceeds 218 co-sponsors, which is a majority of the 435 voting members of the House.

The bill was introduced in the House by Representatives Paul Tonko (D-NY) and Andy Barr (R-KY).

“Bi-partisan support from more than 218 members is a critical milestone because it demonstrates to House leadership that the bill will pass on the House floor,” said the executive director of the Coalition for Horse Racing Integrity, Shawn Smeallie.

The coalition is an umbrella group for a diverse group of racing organizations, racetracks, owner and breeder associations, and animal welfare groups that support passage of the Act.

"Clearly Congress recognizes that the current patchwork quilt of state regulations that govern the industry is failing and an effective anti-doping program with a national set of drug standards is needed to bring equine safety and integrity back to the sport."

The bill is being considered by the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce. It is supported by the chair and original co-sponsor, Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL).

Other key members such as Representatives Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and Vern Buchanan (R-FL), co-chairs of the Congressional Animal Protection Caucus, strongly support the bill.

Following passage by the sub and full committees, the bill would advance to the House floor for a vote by the House of Representatives.

The Act will create a private, independent horse racing anti-doping authority, the Horseracing Anti-Doping and Medication Control Authority, responsible for developing and administering a nationwide anti-doping and medication control program for horse racing.

The new authority will create a set of uniform anti-doping rules, including lists of permitted and prohibited substances and methods in line with international anti-doping standards and veterinarian ethical standards.

The new nationwide rules would replace the current state-by-state regulatory mechanism that governs horse racing's 38 separate racing jurisdictions.

The act was originally introduced by Congressmen Barr and Tonko in 2015 and was re-introduced by them in 2017 and 2019.

The 2017 version contained many refinements that were the result of collaborations among the Coalition for Horse Racing Integrity, horseracing industry constituents, and other interested parties.

The amended 2017 version of the bill, which is nearly identical to the current version, modified the 2015 version to:

Ensure that there would be no effect on the Interstate Horseracing Act of 1978;
Increase the number of board members on the new authority with horse racing-related expertise;
Feature standing technical advisory committees, including active members from the racing industry;
Strengthen protections against retrospective enforcement of the rules before the act came into force;
Provide the industry with a "safety valve: to affect alternative regulatory approaches; and
Include a ban on the use of medication on race days.
"Momentum is building to reform the horse racing industry and establish a meaningful and effective drug control program," continued Smeallie.

"This past year highlighted many of the challenges facing the horse racing industry, and the Horseracing Integrity Act will go a long way to improving the health of our equine athletes."

The new authority would be governed by a board composed of six individuals who have shown expertise in a variety of horse racing areas, six individuals from the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), and the USADA's chief executive.

The USADA is recognized by Congress as the official anti-doping agency for US Olympic, Pan American, and Paralympic sports.

A companion bill has been introduced in the Senate by Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Martha McSally (R-AZ). It currently has 17 co-sponsors.

Passage of the House bill will help move the bill through the Senate.

The advocacy group Animal Wellness Action described the 218th cosponsor as a milestone for what it said was landmark legislation.

The bill, it said, would end the doping of American racehorses in competition.

"We're thrilled to see the Horseracing Integrity Act, one of our top priorities in the 116th Congress, hit this mile marker," said the group's executive director, Marty Irby.

"American horseracing has dealt itself a self-inflicted wound, and Congress must pass this legislation quickly, or the debate will shift away from eliminating abuses in horseracing to eliminating horseracing itself."

Horse racing in the US is currently regulated by 38 different racing jurisdictions, which limits regulators' effective management of the many issues involved in the health and safety of racehorses.

The group said the new anti-doping body created under the legislation would help ensure racehorses were free from performance-enhancing drugs during racing and training, creating a safer environment for horses and jockeys.

RADIO: Coverage of Interstate 11 Bill (KFYI)

RADIO: Coverage of Interstate 11 Bill (KFYI)

TV: Coverage of impeachment, McSally's statement (CBS)

TV: Coverage of annual funding bill, no money for Fort Huachuca (KGUN)

RADIO: Coverage of interstate 11 bill (KFYI)

TV: Coverage of annual funding bill, no money for Fort Huachuca (KGUN)

RADIO: Coverage of Appropriations bill, \$152 million for San Luis port of entry, \$190 million for two new military construction projects (KTAR)

TV: Coverage of impeachment and vulnerable senators, there are base voters in their states, urban and suburbs can change the vote (CSPAN)

RADIO: Coverage of McSally on senate version of buyers bill, Humane Cosmetics Act (WHRV)

TV: Benefit to democrats for impeachment will be news reporters in home states of vulnerable senators asking questions about impeachment (CNN)

RADIO: McConnell wants vulnerable senators to talk about the economy and employment level so people wonder why they would vote against Trump (WIND-IL)

MCCARTHY

None.

SINEMA NEWS**Bill Would Ban New Uranium Mining Near Grand Canyon National Park (Fronteras)**

Laurel Morales

Arizona Sen. Kyrsten Sinema introduced legislation Thursday that would ban any new uranium mining on land surrounding Grand Canyon National Park.

The legislation would make permanent a ban on new uranium mining claims on a million acres of land surrounding Grand Canyon National Park. The Havasupai Tribe has been fighting the impacts of uranium mining on its drinking water for decades.

"Thirty years ago, when we first began fighting against the disastrous effects of uranium mining in our homelands, we were alone in this fight," Havasupai Chairwoman Muriel Uqualla said.

Trout Unlimited's Nathan Rees said this bill also will help protect mule deer herds, the trout fishery and other wildlife.

"We really don't understand the hydrogeology of this area and it's just too sensitive to mine," Rees said. "Canyon Mine was supposed to be a dry mine shaft and it's flooded. It flooded a few years ago and they're still pumping contaminated water out of that."

In October, Congress passed a similar bill. The major difference is the Senate bill would ensure a study to gauge the availability of uranium in the U.S.

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Leading Tucson's innovative future (Inside Tucson Business)

Josh Polacheck, Zach Yentzer

Over the last decade, Tucson has seen a renaissance in its innovation and entrepreneurial sector. While there is a long way to go, there is renewed energy from the University of Arizona and the public and private sectors to invest more energy and creativity into new startups of all kinds and sizes launched out of Tucson.

Just this November, Arizona Governor Doug Ducey wrote an op-ed in the Arizona Daily Star spotlighting Tucson as one of the country's newest tech hubs to emerge. Sen. Kyrsten Sinema highlighted the new AZ Forge Business Innovation Hub in downtown Tucson (opening spring 2020) as the next step to establishing an innovation district in the urban core connecting the university and community to entrepreneurs. And, the 2019 TENWEST Impact Festival kicked off with then-Mayor Jonathan Rothschild's curated "Building Innovative Cities Conference," bringing mayors from around the country to Tucson to discuss how to foster a smart, innovative city.

It was this TENWEST event that spurred Tucson's young professionals to curate ENGAGE on Friday, Nov. 22. It was a semi-annual deep dive convening young professionals from around the city to address key community issues. This time the focus was on how professionals aged 21 to 45 can catalyze innovation districts and the entrepreneurial economy in Tucson, as well as of most concern and interest to this demographic.

One thing we do know is that to make Tucson "America's next tech heavyweight," as Ducey said, it will take a young workforce that is engaged in and attracted to the city.

This year's ENGAGE event featured an organizing team made up of four organizations, catalyzed by Tucson Young Professionals earlier in 2019, including the Young Nonprofit Professionals Network, Startup Tucson and the International City/County Management Association University of Arizona Chapter. Supported by the University of Arizona Center for Innovation and Tech Parks Arizona, the Southern Arizona Leadership Council and the Center for the Future of Arizona, ENGAGE brought together over 50 young professionals along with key leaders and influencers from diverse industries and backgrounds to provide insight on important areas of Tucson's innovation economy, what aspects impact young professionals the most, and what areas we should work on as a network.

While Tucson has begun to converge around specific industries that provide it a competitive advantage and some of the needed infrastructure for innovation, Tucson's young professionals expressed that more work needs to be done to ensure the best possible present and future.

There is still a need for more funding for entrepreneurship, but when asked how to build an innovative city, core underlying issues dominated the discussion. Also discussed was the need to make sure that, as Tucson grows, affordability and cost of living don't skyrocket, that wages keep up with growth, and that jobs are grown, both in and out of the innovation economy, so there is a critical mass of people who can help build an innovative city.

Common issues like transportation infrastructure and the need for greater density and proximity to fuel innovation came up as well.

In the end, Tucson's young professionals landed on a few areas they could drive change around: the need for a better city and ecosystem, storytelling and branding, the need to integrate an innovation district into Tucson's upcoming General Plan and the need for Tucson to continue building diversity and inclusion into this sector.

OPINION: On parental leave, a bipartisan strike for progress (The Hill)

Joe Liberman

For the whole of my public service career—and for a long while before that—our nation's leaders have struggled to navigate the boundary that separates government and family. Conservatives and liberals, both acting with good will, have adopted very different points of view. But that chasm need not doom them to fight about the issue in perpetuity. This month, despite being obscured by a whole variety of other stories coming from Capitol Hill, Senate and House Democrats and Republicans together introduced a bill adjusting the tax code to help families cover the costs of caring for a newborn or a newly adopted child during the baby's first months at home.

Sens. Bill Cassidy, M.D. (R-La.) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.) and Reps. Colin Allred (D-Texas) and Elise Stefanik (R-N.Y.) deserve a lot of credit for what they've managed to do. In a moment of nearly unprecedented political rancor, they came together to craft a workable solution to a very complex challenge. This is the hard and unappreciated work, of being a public servant. That is exactly what the Framers intended for Congress to do. We should celebrate it, and see how we can apply the lessons to other vexing American challenges.

Some history. The first bill President Bill Clinton signed after assuming office was the Family and Medical Leave Act, which guarantees employees of firms above a certain size time off to care for a child or sick family member. But that leave is not necessarily paid time off—it simply provides that the person taking leave won't lose their job. In the early 1990s, even that was a stretch. Today, by contrast, some states are using workers compensation funds to replace some of the income families lose during an extended leave.

Despite that progress, Washington today remains largely divided on this important issue. At a moment when deficits are out-of-control, budget hawks are averse to the additional spending (or tax expenditures) and proposals to invest substantial additional sums in paid leave are a non-starter for some. At the same time, the need is greater than ever. With many more women in the workforce and many more children being raised in single-parent homes, fewer new parents can afford to lose their salary in the early months, or cover the costs of early daycare.

Sens. Cassidy and Sinema and Reps. Allred and Stefanik worked collaboratively with other senators and members of the House of Representatives to see if they could find a way forward—a way to help parents without further entangling the federal government. After a great deal of study and some tough negotiation, they emerged with a remarkable and bright, new idea. Their bill would change the way families access the newly expanded Child Tax Credit, letting new parents front-load the benefit during the period they're deluged with new bills, like those associated with daycare, diapers, and all the other expenses of caring for a small child.

Some will complain that the bill doesn't go far enough—that more should be done for young families. Others will complain that it goes too far—that Washington has no place entering family life in this way, and that parents should be expected to cover the costs of a newborn on their own. But most Americans, I expect, will take a different view, namely that these conflicting priorities should be balanced. And this bill, by expanding benefits beyond those who have to take off work, expands the potential benefits offered through an existing credit to a much broader universe of parents.

This is what the exhausted, angry majority of Americans want Washington to do. Here, members of both parties have identified a problem, and then worked collaboratively to craft a solution that will make life better. This model can and

should be followed on other issues where the left and right disagree. Let's hope our leaders take notice, and apply the lessons of this collaboration to the range of challenges now caught in the crossfire.

Program to help lower cost of textbooks added to 2020 bill (KFVS)

Ashley Smith

The Open Textbooks Pilot was included in the Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations bill, and it added another \$2 million of funding to the \$5 million that was set aside last year.

The bill is based on the Senators' Affordable College Textbook Act, which is a competitive grant program to support the creation and expand the use of open college textbooks. These textbooks are available under an open license, allowing professors, students, researchers, and others to freely access the materials.

"With this additional funding, more colleges and universities across the country will be able to participate in the pilot—bringing critical cost-savings to more students. I encourage all interested institutions in Illinois and across the country to apply. It's imperative, to ensure the maximum savings for students, that the Department of Education allocate this funding as Congress has directed it in the bill," U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) said.

"College is expensive enough – textbooks shouldn't drive the price even higher," said U.S Senator Angus King (I-ME). "The expansion of the Open Textbooks Pilot is an important opportunity to help more students affordably access the tools they need to succeed."

"I hear from college students in Minnesota who struggle with the high cost of textbooks, and sometimes forgo materials needed for class. It's my hope that with this additional funding more students and institutions will be able to benefit from open textbooks, in Minnesota and across the country," said U.S. Senator Tina Smith (D-MN). "These efforts will help save students money and ultimately help bring down the amount of student loan debt that young people graduate with."

"Steep textbook costs should never hold an Arizonan back from an education. We're increasing access to course materials so all students can receive a quality education," said U.S. Senator Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ).

Textbook costs are a barrier some students face when attaining a college education.

According to The College Board, the average student budget for college books and supplies during the 2017 2018 academic year was \$1,240 at four-year public institutions.

According to a survey by U.S. PIRG, 65 percent of students decided not to buy a textbook because of the cost and 94 percent of those students worried it would negatively affect their grade.

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Trump's position unshakeable in Senate trial after impeachment (Indica News)

Rita Jna

US President Donald Trump boasted during his campaign for the presidency that: "I could stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody and I wouldn't lose any voters."

That is the test for him in the Senate when he is tried, though only on the less dramatic charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

Even if he were to lose a vote or two among his party Senators in the Senate trial, he will still be tweeting from the White House when the trial is done.

A supermajority of two-thirds, or 67 votes, will be needed in the 100-member Senate to convict and throw him out of office and that will require 20 Republicans to cross over. A massive revolt on that scale among the 53 Republicans is unlikely.

Trump held on to all the Republicans in the House of Representatives on the impeachment vote and even picked up three Democrat votes.

But in the Senate, there are four shaky Republicans, who can vote against him with no consequence to their base and maybe even find Democrats backing them for re-election. Even if they defect, the calculus of voting still backs Trump.

Democrats hold 45 Senate seats and the two independents vote with them; one of them, Bernie Sanders, is seeking the party's presidential nomination.

Neither of the two impeached Presidents, Andrew Johnson in 1868 and Bill Clinton in 1998, were convicted by the Senate because of the supermajority requirement.

There were only 35 votes to convict Johnson, one short of two-thirds in a smaller Senate of 57 members.

Clinton did better with 45 votes to convict and 55 not to.

Of the Republican fence-sitters, Mitt Romney ran unsuccessfully against President Barack Obama in 2016 and has been personally insulted by Trump.

Lisa Murkowski has been critical of Trump, but has a strong base of supporters in her state, Alaska.

Two others, Cory Gardner from Colorado and Susan Collins from Maine, are from states where the Democratic Party is strong and could face challenges in their re-election if seen as too closely identified with Trump.

On the Democratic side, three Senators from Republican-leaning states – Joe Manchin from West Virginia, Kyrsten Sinema from Arizona and Doug Jones from Alabama — face a similar dilemma.

Republican defections can, however, affect the way the trial is conducted.

A simple majority of 51 votes is required for setting the rules of the trial, which will be presided over by Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell's plans for running the trial could be jeopardized if four of his flock break ranks – and that is the only hitch on the horizon now.

However, Democrat Speaker Nancy Pelosi has dropped a big question mark over the proceedings.

She has said that she may delay sending to the Senate the Articles of Impeachment as the chargesheet voted by the House is called. The Senate can't start the trial without formally receiving them from her.

She told reporters after the impeachment vote that the reason for a possible hold-up was her concern that there was nothing that "looks fair to us" to us in the Senate set up for the trial.

McConnell has turned down Democratic Senate leader Chuck Schumer's demand to call former National Security Adviser John Bolton, and Trump's Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney to testify during the trial.

Trump wants to hold a full trial with several witnesses including former Vice President Joe Biden and his son Hunter, and the whistleblower who reported on Trump's call with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky.

The Bidens' dealings in Ukraine and Trump's request to Zelensky in the phone call to them set off the impeachment process.

But McConnell is reported to want a simple, short trial and he and Trump will have to work out their strategy.

In the end as the Republican leader in the House, Kevin McCarthy, declared: "Trump will be President today, will be President tomorrow, will be President after the impeachment."

But voters will decide next November if he will be when his current term ends.

ARIZONA NEWS

None.

ARIZONA EDITORIALS

None.

PRESS RELEASES

Health Care Ruling Underscores McSally-GOP Threat To Pre-Existing Condition Coverage Protections (AZ Dems)

PHOENIX — Issuing a decision that starkly underscores Martha McSally's failure to stand up for Arizonans' health care access, the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals today ruled to send back down Washington Republicans and Attorney General Mark Brnovich's lawsuit to end coverage protections for 2.8 million Arizonans who have a pre-existing condition.

In 2017, McSally voted to provide Republicans with their grounds for challenging the coverage protections as unconstitutional.

Over the past year, McSally has repeatedly refused to stand up for Arizonans' health care access and oppose the lawsuit, instead saying that it's not her "role" to do so. She has a long record of voting to drive up premiums and gut coverage protections — all to enrich her corporate health insurance industry and big pharma backers.

In October, McSally voted to protect a GOP expansion of "junk" insurance plans that are opposed by the AARP because they let insurance companies "deny coverage to people with preexisting conditions" and "impose an age tax, charging older Americans much higher premiums."

"Martha McSally's continued refusal to oppose this dangerous lawsuit has been yet another instance of her siding with her corporate health care industry backers instead of representing Arizonans," said Arizona Democratic Party spokesperson Brad Bainum. "Moving forward, every Arizonan now knows that McSally fully stands with her fellow Republicans as they continue their efforts to tear down pre-existing condition coverage protections."

The lawsuit, which Republicans are sure to continue, would bring about a disaster for Arizona families, with devastating implications for millions of Arizonans' health care access. Among other things, the lawsuit:

Eliminates pre-existing condition coverage protections: Insurance companies will again be able to jack up prices on or deny coverage to people with a pre-existing condition — putting coverage at risk for 2.8 million Arizonans who have a pre-existing condition;

Allows insurance companies charge women more than men: Insurance companies will once again be able to discriminate against women and charge them more than men;

Makes it easier for insurance companies to send families into medical bankruptcy: Insurance companies will again be able to impose annual and lifetime coverage limits — caps on how much the insurer will cover before individuals are required to pay out-of-pocket — resulting in dramatically increased out-of-pocket costs for millions of Americans;

Threatens Arizona's AHCCCS expansion: Coverage would be jeopardized for the 400,000 individuals who gained health insurance under Arizona's AHCCCS expansion — a direct attack on the 3 in 8 Arizona kids and 3 in 5 nursing home residents who are covered under AHCCCS;

Ends the provision that lets people under 26 stay on their parents' coverage: Younger Arizonans will have to seek out their own health insurance coverage, no longer able to stay on their parents' health insurance plan until the age of 26; and

Reopens the Medicare "donut hole" and increases costs for seniors: Medicare beneficiaries will "have to pay more for preventive care," while the Medicare Part D coverage gap would be reopened, meaning that seniors will "have to pay more toward their prescription drugs."

WATCH: New DSCC Digital Ads Hold Unelected Senator Martha McSally Accountable for Corporate Tax Giveaway (DSCC)

Two Years After McSally Helped Jam Tax Giveaway Through Congress, "Few Americans See Savings" But Corporations Got a "Windfall" & "U.S. Billionaires Paid a Lower Tax Rate Than the Working Class Last Year"

The Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee is launching a new digital ad in Arizona, holding unelected Senator Martha McSally accountable for her "lopsided giveaway" to corporations and the wealthiest Americans. WATCH:

Two years after Senator McSally helped jam this handout through Congress, the new ad reveals some of the worst lowlights of the law — including how it allows corporations and billionaires to pay a lower tax rate than working families,

drove up taxes for Gold Star families, sent the deficit surging past \$1 trillion, and laid the foundation for a lawsuit that could send health care costs soaring and end coverage protections for Arizonans with pre-existing conditions.

“Two years after unelected Senator Martha McSally jammed her tax scam through Congress, massive corporations and wealthy GOP donors are reaping the benefits,” said DSCC spokesperson Izzi Levy. “Meanwhile, after helping pass this reckless handout that now threatens to end health care protections for Arizonans with pre-existing conditions, McSally says it’s ‘not her role’ to do anything about it. Arizonans rejected McSally once after she helped pass this giveaway to the special interests, and they will continue to reject her toxic agenda.”

The DSCC has held Senate Republicans accountable for their reckless tax handout all week, highlighting some of the most damaging aspects of this deeply unpopular law — including its unprecedented windfall for corporations and the wealthiest Americans and subsequent surge in corporate stock buybacks, as well as its cruel tax hike for Gold Star families.

McSally Delivers Major Health Care Wins for Arizona (McSally)

U.S. Senator Martha McSally (R-AZ) delivered major health care wins for Arizona in a year-end funding package that passed the U.S. Senate today.

McSally successfully helped extend the medical expense deduction, so families with high health care costs do not see a tax increase next year.

In addition, McSally delayed cuts in Medicaid funding to community hospitals known as disproportionate share hospitals (DSH), and secured extended funding for critical community health programs which support underserved and vulnerable populations.

The package permanently repeals three harmful taxes imposed under the Affordable Care Act: the Health Insurance Tax (HIT), the Medical Device Tax, and the Cadillac Tax. McSally has fought to repeal these taxes since she was a member of the House of Representatives, and is a co-sponsor of all three Senate bills mandating a repeal.

“These wins are major breakthrough for Arizona families,” McSally said. “We are ensuring community hospitals can afford to keep their doors open so residents in underserved populations have a place to go for care. This bill will help drive down rising health care costs and incentivize innovation in the medical field so that Arizona families can access cutting-edge care. In addition, we are instituting policies that will help lower prescription drug costs, so no one is forced to leave their medicine at the pharmacy counter.”

The package includes the McSally-backed CREATES Act which will help lower prescription drug prices by allowing generic-drug developers to bring civil actions against brand-name drug makers for not selling them samples needed for testing during the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval process.

Included in the package are other key health care priorities McSally has been advocating for:

- \$2.8 billion to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for Alzheimer’s disease research
- \$10 million to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the establishment of a suicide prevention program.
- \$27 million to the CDC for the Diabetes Prevention Program
- \$3.8 billion in continued funding for opioid prevention and treatment through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA)
- \$944 million for programs to improve maternal and child health, including an additional \$5 million to reduce maternal mortality through the Health Resources and Services Administration.

On December 10, McSally sent a letter to Senate leadership urging them to extend the medical expense deduction in any end-of-year funding package.

On December 9, McSally introduced legislation to delay Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) payments for two years. DSH payments go to eligible hospitals that serve a disproportionate share of low-income patients with special needs, including children, seniors and the disabled.

On October 21, McSally sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (KY) and Minority Leader Charles Schumer (NY) urging long-term funding of community health centers (CHCs).

On September 17, McSally sent a bipartisan letter with members of the Arizona Congressional Delegation urging Congressional leaders to permanently repeal the medical device tax.

On February 28, McSally joined a letter to Senate leaders urging a repeal of the Health Insurance Tax.

McSally Introduces Three Bills to Preserve Arizona's Landmarks (McSally)

U.S. Senator Martha McSally (R-AZ) introduced three bills today to preserve Arizona's public lands and attract new visitors to the state.

"Arizona is home to unique natural and cultural treasures," McSally said. "We want to preserve our distinctive history and ensure it is kept accessible to the public. These efforts will improve our lands and boost Arizona's economy by attracting new tourism to our state."

The three bills include the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area Reauthorization Act; the Chiricahua National Park Act; and the Casa Grande Ruins National Monument Boundary Modification Act.

Yuma Mayor Doug Nicholls: "The reauthorization of the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area is vital to continuing the transformational work of preserving the Yuma story in its cultures, in its history and in its foundation for many generations to come. Thank you, Senator McSally, for taking the lead and introducing this critical reauthorization bill in the Senate."

The Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area Reauthorization will reauthorize the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area (YCNHA), which expires at the end of Fiscal Year 2021, for an additional 15 years. The National Heritage Area includes the Yuma Crossing National Historic Landmark, the Yuma Territorial Prison and Colorado River State Historic Parks, Fort Yuma, and over 3 miles of contiguous riverfront parks, trails, and 400 acres of restored wetlands.

YCNHA was established in 2000 through legislation by Rep. Ed Pastor and extended for an additional 5 years through legislation by Sen. John McCain. The bill has the support of the City of Yuma, Yuma County and the Quechen Indian Tribe.

Click [HERE](#) to read the full bill.

The Chiricahua National Park Act will give national park status to Chiricahua National Monument. The national monument is comprised of nearly 12,000 acres southeast of Willcox. If passed, Chiricahua would become Arizona's fourth national park. This act would not change the boundaries or funding to the area.

McSally introduced this legislation when she was in the House of Representatives.

The effort to recognize Chiricahua as a National Park has garnered strong support from the City of Benson, the City of Douglas, the City of Tucson, the Southeast Arizona Governments Organization, and the Wilcox Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture.

Click [HERE](#) to read the full bill.

The Casa Grande Ruins National Monument Boundary Modification Act will improve the management of the historic resources and nearby infrastructure of the Monument.

Specifically, the legislation will:

Allow the National Park Service (NPS) to acquire about 200 acres of adjacent private land from willing sellers

Transfer 11.2 acres of adjacent BLM land to NPS to be administered as part of the Monument

Correct an unintentional trespass of the San Carlos Irrigation Project (SCIP) by transferring a narrow sliver of land (3.5 acres) along the southern edge of the monument to the Bureau of Indian Affairs to be managed as part of SCIP.

Authorize NPS to enter into a joint administration agreement with the state (if the state wants to) for 200 acres of State Trust land near the Monument that encompasses the historic Adamsville townsite.

Click [HERE](#) to read the full bill.

This bill is in partnership with a bipartisan House version introduced by Rep. Tom O'Halleran (D-AZ) and is supported by the City of Coolidge, Pinal County, Gila River Indian Community, and the National Park Conservation Association.

Mark Kelly for Senate News Clips - [DATE \@ "MMMM d, yyyy"]

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KELLY NEWS

[HYPERLINK "<https://theintercept.com/2019/12/19/democrats-republicans-senate-2020/>"]

Akela Lacey

SENATE DEMOCRATS' CAMPAIGN arm has endorsed three former Republicans, adding to a list of races in which the party has continued a futile strategy of backing moderates over candidates with more progressive platforms.

The latest endorsement came on Monday, when the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee put its weight behind M.J. Hegar, who voted in the 2016 Republican primary, in the race to replace Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas. The other former Republicans backed by the DSCC are Mark Kelly, who voted as a Republican as recently as 2012 and is now running for an Arizona Senate seat, and Barbara Bollier, who became a Democrat last year and is running in Kansas.

Democrats need to win at least four additional seats — or three seats, and the presidency — in order to take back a majority in the Senate. Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, who has had trouble recruiting candidates, said he's focused on eight races, including at least four states where the DSCC has already made endorsements: Arizona, Colorado, North Carolina, and Texas. In some of those states, national Democrats have overlooked popular progressive candidates who say the committee is unfairly playing favorites in races and taking away voters' ability to make their own choices. By toeing the line between Republicans and Democrats, the DSCC is continuing a broader party strategy of backing away from — and in some cases, trying to intimidate — progressives in favor of more moderate centrists that has been repeatedly shown not to work, costing them several races.

"We're proud to support candidates who are running strong campaigns and can win their races," DSCC spokesperson Lauren Passalacqua said in a statement to The Intercept. "Unlike their Republican opponents, these candidates will do what's right for their states and fight for taking action against climate change, making health care more affordable, and getting big money out of politics."

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Hegar, who has only recently committed to the Democratic Party, in her 2018 campaign was noticeably contradictory on gun policy, though in recent months she's expressed support for stricter gun control laws. One of her opponents, longtime Texas organizer Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez, raised \$459,000 in the third quarter to Hegar's \$1 million, though she is slightly ahead of Hegar in a November poll from the University of Texas at Tyler. Tzintzún Ramirez has spoken out against the DSCC's recruitment policy, calling it "tone-deaf."

Kelly, meanwhile, will likely win the Democratic primary and face Republican Sen. Martha McSally in a special election next year. As recently as 2012, he voted in the Republican presidential primary in Texas, the Arizona Republic reported. Kelly then voted for Barack Obama in the general election. He changed his voter registration from "not declared" to Democrat in December of last year.

The DSCC endorsed Bollier, a Kansas state senator who became a Democrat just last year. She officially entered the Senate race in October and was endorsed by the DSCC that same month. Before switching parties, she served as a Republican for seven years in the state legislature — six as a representative, one as a senator. Bollier is seeking to replace Republican Sen. Pat Roberts, who announced in January that he wouldn't be seeking reelection. Usha Reddi and Nancy Boyda are among other candidates running in the Democratic primary. Former U.S. Attorney Barry Grissom was the top Democratic fundraiser with \$468,000 before he dropped out in October and endorsed Bollier.

IN OTHER SENATE races, national Democrats are backing conservative Democratic candidates over viable progressives. In Kentucky, for example, the party has coalesced around Marine fighter pilot Amy McGrath, a centrist who lost a winnable 2018 House race and stands little chance of unseating Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. State Rep. Charles Booker is running to her left.

In North Carolina, the DSCC has endorsed commercial litigation attorney, former state senator, and military veteran Cal Cunningham to replace Republican Sen. Thom Tillis, who is one of the least popular senators in the country. The committee has backed Cunningham even though state Sen. Erica Smith, a progressive, has led both Cunningham and Tillis in polling — as recently as November. Cunningham has far outraised Smith, with \$1.7 million — including \$200,000 of his own money — to her \$133,000, including \$4,500 of her own money. Cunningham has had significant fundraising help from donors linked to Schumer.

Cunningham served in the North Carolina legislature from 2001 to 2003. During his 2000 campaign, he received an A rating from the NRA, and he later took several positions that aligned him with the gun lobby. Cunningham has recently supported stricter gun control measures, including universal background checks, which Smith also supports, and his campaign spokesperson Rachel Petri said in his current campaign, he's "been clear in his support for passing background checks and banning high-capacity magazines that turn guns into weapons of war." Smith, who's been in office since 2015, has a record of support from unions, as well as pro-choice, environmental, and good governance groups.

In Colorado, the DSCC endorsed former Gov. John Hickenlooper almost immediately after he dropped out of the presidential race to run in the Democratic primary to face Republican Sen. Cory Gardner next year. He's a self-described friend of business interests, and has said he supports "universal healthcare" but not Medicare for All. Hickenlooper once drank fracking fluid to try to prove that fracking wasn't all that bad. At the time of Hickenlooper's entry into the race, former state House Speaker Andrew Romanoff was a top contender, and he's raised \$1.4 million so far. He's called the DSCC strategy a "recipe for disaster." The DSCC pressured consultants not to work with Romanoff before they endorsed Hickenlooper, The Intercept reported in August.

Critics say the DSCC strategy closely mimics that of its counterparts in the House, where the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee is refusing to work with vendors contracting with primary candidates challenging incumbents. While the DSCC endorses former Republicans over more progressive candidates, the DCCC continues to give a significant amount of business to firms working with Republican candidates, The Intercept reported this week. Last year, the DCCC backed Rep. Jeff Van Drew, who has supported restrictions on abortion, received a 100 percent rating from the NRA, and has been vocal against impeachment, over potentially viable progressive candidates including former Cory Booker staffer Will Cunningham and retired teacher Tanzie Youngblood. Van Drew is expected to switch to the Republican Party later this week.

[[HYPERLINK "https://www.kgun9.com/news/local-news/funding-for-ft-huachuca-project-diverted-for-border-wall-not-included-in-defense-spending-bill"](https://www.kgun9.com/news/local-news/funding-for-ft-huachuca-project-diverted-for-border-wall-not-included-in-defense-spending-bill)]

Sam Radwany

Funding for a Ft. Huachuca project that was diverted to build a wall at the U.S.-Mexico border was not included in a defense spending package passed by Congress this week.

The planned ground transport equipment building was scheduled to receive \$30 million to begin construction next year. But in February, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to divert military funding to pay for the wall after Congress refused to pay for it.

Sen. Martha McSally says the Ft. Huachuca project was already stalled for "unforeseen environmental issues at the construction site," and that she's received assurances the project will be funded in the next fiscal year.

RELATED: Pentagon notifies states that will be impacted by diverted funds for border wall

"The Senate voted in a landslide bipartisan way (86 – 8) to fund affected military construction projects in this year's defense bill," McSally said in a statement Thursday. "Now, Democrats are refusing to fully fund these military construction projects due to political games around border security. Shame on them."

Democratic Senate candidate Mark Kelly, who is running against McSally in 2020, says McSally has made the project's future uncertain.

"Senator McSally made promises she couldn't keep and put funding for Arizona's military bases on the chopping block, instead of putting our state first," Kelly said in a statement released Tuesday.

The spending bill does include hundreds of millions of federal dollars for bases across Arizona, including \$132 million for the A-10 based at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson.

[**HYPERLINK**

"http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=89adeb9b-bb40-496b-b33d-aeefc6c1fe95"]

MCSALLY NEWS

[**HYPERLINK "https://www.wsj.com/articles/democrats-pressure-gop-senators-over-unfunded-military-projects-11576837803"]**

Gabriel Rubin

MILITARY PROJECTS whose funding was diverted this year under President Trump's national emergency declaration to build a border wall will not be built next year either, after Democrats refused to backfill funding in year-end spending bills. Democrats are eager to highlight projects that lost funding in states and districts represented by vulnerable Republicans. Top targets include Colorado Sen. Cory Gardner, whose state lost millions in funding for Colorado Springs' Peterson Air Force Base, and Sen. Martha McSally, whose state lost \$30 million for a southern Arizona Army base.

Democrats have hit them hard for not opposing Trump's emergency declaration, and the lack of backfilling leaves Republicans without a definitive answer on when, or if, those projects will get funded. "Democrats are refusing to fully fund these military construction projects due to political games around border security," McSally said in a statement. Gardner didn't respond to requests for comment.

The backfilling was a key administration justification for transferring the funds: the projects were merely delayed, not canceled. Democrats aim to make such transfers less palatable to the White House. The projects include base improvements in both the U.S. and overseas. The fund transfer itself is caught up in legal purgatory, frozen by federal judges. The administration has promised to appeal those rulings.

Still, Democrats were unable to get their desired restrictions on fund transfers included during conference negotiations with Senate Republican appropriators. Other Democrats are furious the appropriations package included \$1.375 billion in border wall funding.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

Which do you think will be the most competitive Senate races in 2020? Join the conversation below.

WISCONSIN DEMOCRATS plan extensive voter outreach effort after judge orders more than 200,000 voters purged from the rolls. The registrations were nullified after the voters didn't respond within 30 days to letters seeking to confirm their addresses. Democrats view the decision as an attempt to suppress the votes of Democratic voters like college students and urban renters who tend to move more frequently. Republicans dismiss that concern and note that the judge decided to follow the letter of the law aimed at preventing people from voting in multiple locations.

"It's possible to organize your way out of a purge," said Wisconsin Democratic Party Chairman Ben Wikler in an interview. Once the party has a list of purged voters, it plans to use all manner of methods to reach them and get

them to register during early-voting periods or election day in coming primary and statewide judicial elections. Wisconsin has same-day registration, meaning voters with identification and proof of address can be added to the rolls at a polling place.

RENEWABLE ENERGY industry gets slammed in year-end tax deal. Tax credits for solar weren't extended at their current level of 30%, and will drop four percentage points in 2020, followed by a similar drop in 2021 and a steep drop to 10% in 2022 just for commercial and utility installations. Democrats failed to push through a package that would have extended credits on solar, wind, electric vehicles and homeowner energy-efficiency upgrades.

Meanwhile, as part of the year-end spending bill, Congress allocated an extra \$10 million for a total of \$750 million towards "technologies to advance coal, natural gas, oil, and other fossil fuel resources." The White House lobbied hard against renewable energy credits, and efforts by House Democrats, environmental groups and renewable energy trade groups failed to break through.

INSURANCE COMPANIES cheer as Congress loosens rules on annuities in retirement accounts. The measure takes away an employer's responsibility to choose the lowest-cost plans for their employees' 401(k) plans. That opens the door for insurance-company annuities to be included in far more retirement plans than currently. MetLife, Principal Financial and the American Council of Life Insurers were among those taking a victory lap following the measure's inclusion in the package.

LUXURY CONDOS with "Trump" branding typically sell for 20% more than comparable units, according to an analysis by real estate broker Redfin Corp. But that's down eight percentage points from before he was elected president, with particularly large price drops in Democratic-leaning areas like Chicago. The analysis didn't look at Trump-branded properties in New York, where some data for Trump property transactions wasn't available.

TRUMP ENTERS 2020 in a hole with voters that's significantly deeper than what President Obama faced in 2012. Thirty-four percent of voters say they're certain to vote for Trump, with 48% certain to vote against him, according to a new Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll. Eighteen percent say it depends who the Democratic nominee is. At the same point in Obama's re-election bid, he had 34% certain to vote for him, too, but 37% certain to vote against him.

Trump's Support Heading into 2020

Source: WSJ/NBC News survey of 900 adults, Dec.14-17; margin of error +/- 3.27 percentage points

%

Certain toSupport

Certain toVoteAgainst

Depends onNominee

0

10

20

30

40

50

60

NO SMOKING: The House votes to make a smoking ban on Amtrak trains federal law. The bill includes e-cigarettes, following a similar clarification of federal law banning the smoking of e-cigarettes on airplanes last year. Sen. Tom Carper, of Amtrak-loving Delaware, has companion legislation pending in the Senate.

MINOR MEMOS: Vegan group promises \$1 million for veterans if Trump gives up animal products for a month.... Former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn, who faces sentencing by a federal judge in January, cheers on his niece, Miss Rhode Island, at Miss America competition.... Mike Pence drops by a German restaurant and a Christmas superstore as impeachment debate rages in Congress.

[[HYPERLINK "http://wvmetronews.com/2019/12/19/nation-awaits-next-step-in-impeachment-process/"](http://wvmetronews.com/2019/12/19/nation-awaits-next-step-in-impeachment-process/)]

Mike Nolting

U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has yet to commit to when she will forward the two articles of impeachment against President Donald Trump to the U.S. Senate for a trial.

The House voted along party lines Wednesday night to impeach Trump. All three House members from West Virginia voted against both measures.

Fairmont State University Assistant Professor for Political Science Greg Noone said Thursday Pelosi may be holding out to see if the leadership of the Senate will concede on a few issues.

"There was a poll that 71 percent of Americans want to see a trial with witnesses and I think that's what they're hanging their hat on," Noone said during a Thursday appearance on MetroNews "Talkline." "That they can get those couple of Republican senators to side with Democrats for a trial with witnesses. Otherwise, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has already signaled that he will not be impartial."

Noone said Republican Senators Cory Gardner from Colorado, Linda Collins from Maine, Martha McSally from Arizona and Lisa Murkowski from Alaska are potential targets for the Democrats.

Noone said it takes just 51 votes to establish rules for the trial, while 67 votes are needed for a conviction.

MetroNews

@WVMetroNews

Greg Noone, @FairmontState Professor Political Science, talks with @DaveWilsonMN about impeachment and how the view of its usage has changed in America. WATCH: <http://wvmetronews.com/channel/>

Embedded video

2

8:43 AM - Dec 19, 2019

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Noone said the impeachment process has once again shown the polarized environment of today. He said his students want facts and most of their parents get news from sites that confirm their beliefs. He said the result is students are left searching for facts from the internet and alternative media outlets.

Noone said past political practices have resulted in an environment of tribalism.

"The system at-large is broken and it's broken because of gerrymandering, it's broken because of unlimited money," Noone said. "That's what's creating this hyper-partisanship."

Noone said in 1994 when the Republicans won the U.S. house then speaker Newt Gingrich ended the practice of families relocating to Washington D.C. with elected leaders. He said those family relationships, outside the halls of Congress, helped keep debate civil. Shortly after, he says the Clinton impeachment drove another wedge between the two parties.

Noone also said the internet has played a major role in pitting one side against the other.

"The confluence of these events has led to it," Noone said. "Between Bill Clinton, Newt Gingrich and the internet it's really the beginning of all this."

He said most people aren't willing to listen to the opposing view in many cases.

"So, it's an echo chamber of validation that goes on and it entrenches people more into their positions. Unfortunately, a lot of these positions are not based on fact, they're based on their gut, how they feel," he said.

[**HYPERLINK**

"<https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/arizona/2019/12/19/usmca-trade-deal-gets-unanimous-approval-arizona-congress-members/2699249001/>"]

Ronald Hansen, Russ Wiles

A day after the rancorous, party-line vote to impeach President Donald Trump, Arizona's House delegation came together to unanimously vote in favor of Trump's revised trade deal with Mexico and Canada.

The 385-41 House vote on the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement on Thursday leaves the deal pending in the Senate, which isn't expected to take it up until after Trump's impeachment trial is over early in 2020. All nine of Arizona's House members voted for the measure.

The USMCA deal, sometimes called NAFTA 2.0, would effectively replace the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement. Its passage in the House represents a political victory for Trump, and a model of rare, cross-party collaboration with Democrats.

The deal's advocates, including many in Arizona's congressional delegation, expect it will further bolster trade with the state's No. 1 trade partner, Mexico.

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Among its key provisions, the deal would require the production of a greater share of auto parts in North America to avoid tariffs, provide expanded protection of intellectual property across the continent, make it easier for Mexicans to form labor unions and help dairy farmers gain wider access to markets in all three countries.

Arizona's delegation, like those in other border states, eventually backed the measure that Trump negotiated in November 2018, and that House Democrats modified throughout recent months. The final product won the rare support of the AFL-CIO.

"When (House Speaker Nancy Pelosi) and I agree on an issue, there's something there," said Rep. Paul Gosar, R-Ariz., who is one of the most conservative members of the House.

Even while supporting the measure, Gosar noted his concern that it provides "broad legal immunity to Big Tech, who use it as a shield from accountability."

Rep. Greg Stanton, D-Ariz., said the USMCA is of special value to Arizona, which has outsize trade of all types with Mexico.

"Those of us in border states understand the value of trading with our neighbors," Stanton said. "I can tell you, growing trade relations with Mexico and Canada is essential to Arizona, and this new agreement will offer a big lift to our local companies. Already in Arizona nearly 230,000 jobs rely on across-the-border commerce."

Rep. David Schweikert, R-Ariz., maintained that the deal builds on the corporate tax changes enacted in 2017 that made the U.S. more competitive internationally, and can help prolong the current economic growth.

"I wish we could have done this a year ago, but we're finally getting it done," he said. "We're living almost in a miracle of economic growth and economic stability. This just actually adds one more leg that we can keep this going."

Rep. Tom O'Halleran, D-Ariz., praised the deal, saying the "final agreement is a triumph for hardworking families, our Arizona agriculture producers, businesses of all sizes, and rural communities that are too often overlooked."

U.S. Sen. Martha McSally, R-Ariz., welcomed the deal's passage in the House and said, "I can't wait to vote yes" to it in the Senate.

Arizona business groups applaud passage
Arizona business leaders applauded the deal's passage in the House.

Glenn Hamer, president and CEO of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said Arizona's economy will benefit.

"From e-commerce to agribusiness to our emerging automotive sector, all segments of the Arizona economy win under this agreement," he said in a statement.

DIG DEEPER

Top politics headlines

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Arizona members vote party line to impeach

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LIVE UPDATES: Trump impeached on abuse of power and obstruction

Trade with North American partners Mexico and Canada helps support 228,000 jobs in Arizona, Hamer added.

Allison Gilbreath, executive director of the Arizona Manufacturers Council, said the group is "thrilled" with the House's action.

"The North American manufacturing supply chain is so deeply integrated across borders that maintaining tariff-free trade was essential to ensuring and enhancing the sector's competitiveness," she said in a statement.

[[HYPERLINK "https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/Indivisible-activists-focus-impeachment-heat-on-14918629.php"](https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/Indivisible-activists-focus-impeachment-heat-on-14918629.php)]

Joe Garofall

Indivisible was one of the left-leaning groups that organized more than 600 pro-impeachment rallies nationwide this week before the House impeached President Trump.

So now what for Indivisible, which has an estimated 2 million members nationally in roughly 5,000 chapters, including 200 in the Bay Area? Those groups aren't slowing down, even though the GOP-led Senate is unlikely to remove Trump from office — if House Speaker Nancy Pelosi decides to send the case to the Senate for a trial.

The Senate is what Indivisible is focusing on now: It's going to target vulnerable Republican senators up for re-election in 2020.

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The GOP senators have already heard from the activists. Since the impeachment hearings started, Indivisible members have made 600,000 calls to senators in states where Democrats have hopes of flipping seats, "urging them to stand up on impeachment." Indivisible chapters run autonomously, so they are free to campaign against the senators in their own way.

"Impeachment is the right thing to do because Trump has committed impeachable crimes," Indivisible co-founder Ezra Levin said on The Chronicle's "It's All Political" podcast. "But, politically, if we're just talking about the political impact here, (Trump's approval ratings are) underwater in Iowa, Colorado, Arizona, North Carolina, Montana and Alaska."

Those states have something in common: Each has a Republican senator facing re-election.

But defeating those Republican senators will be tough — although Trump is indeed underwater in them, he's only barely below the surface in some, according to an ongoing Morning Consult poll. And incumbents tend to start with a built-in advantage.

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Two of the senators up for re-election in Indivisible's target states — Alaska Sen. Dan Sullivan and Montana Sen. Steve Daines — are holding "solid Republican" seats, according to the nonpartisan Cook Political Report. Iowa Sen. Joni Ernst is a "likely Republican" win, Cook figures, and North Carolina Sen. Thom Tillis is in the slightly more vulnerable "lean Republican" classification. The others — Colorado Sen. Cory Gardner, Maine Sen. Susan Collins and Arizona Sen. Martha McSally — are running in toss-up states.

"These Republican senators are going to be faced with a choice: Either shield this unpopular president as they're asking for votes from their constituents, or they can vote to convict and demobilize their (Trump-sympathetic) base," Levin said.

"That is a choice I think that these Republican senators should have to face," Levin said. "And I think it helps those of us combatting Trump that they have to face that choice."

But how will it affect Democratic voters in those states if those senators back Trump with little hesitation?

"It energizes those people in Iowa and North Carolina and Maine — they would love to see those Republican senators stand up," Levin said. "But if they don't, they will march all the way to November to ensure that they aren't senators in 2021."

That said, Indivisible's expectations are muted for the Senate impeachment trial — if and when that happens.

"We're not expecting (Senate Majority Leader) Mitch McConnell to offer a fair and transparent trial," said Leah Greenberg, Indivisible's co-founder and co-author with Levin, her husband, of the book "We Are Indivisible: A Blueprint for Democracy After Trump."

"People aren't expecting the Senate trial is going to be some magical moment when we actually get him out of office," Greenberg said. "But they are expecting that it's a moment when Republicans either have to be brave or reveal who they really are."

[**HYPERLINK "<https://kyma.com/news/2019/12/19/newly-passed-spending-bill-includes-152-million-for-san-luis-port-of-entry/>"**]

Lisa Sturgis, Brandon Mejia

Measure also includes \$1.4-million for border wall construction

WASHINGTON, D.C. (KYMA, KSWT, KECY) - The Senate on Thursday passed a \$1.4-trillion spending package that includes more than \$150-million to revamp the San Luis Port of Entry.

Arizona Senator Martha McSally shared the news with KYMA.com just hours after the measure cleared.

"So this is a really big win, and we advocated for it throughout the entire process, and it will now be going to the President's desk," McSally told us.

McSally says the funding, and the project, will have great benefit to people on both sides of the border.

"As you know, that cross-border commerce every single day is for jobs in Southern Arizona and is really important for the local community, and it's important for border security," she said.

McSally says the San Luis Port is one of only three federally-funded projects approved under the new legislation. She says it is the only port in the country to receive money for extensive improvements.

The House has already cleared the spending measure. President Trump is expected to sign it Friday.

[[HYPERLINK "https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/absurd-hold-the-impeachment-articles-scheme-doomed-to-fail"](https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/absurd-hold-the-impeachment-articles-scheme-doomed-to-fail)]

Jay Caruso

The House of Representatives impeached President Trump, and at long last, some Democratic members of the House and plenty of progressive activists got what they've wanted since January 2017.

Naturally, however, that's not enough. With removal from office as likely as there being a faraway world with munchkins, yellow brick roads, and flying monkeys, Trump, not Vice President Mike Pence, will serve as president until at least January 2021.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said there was almost zero chance Trump gets removed, and Sen. Lindsey Graham said he would vote to acquit Trump. As such, some are all agog, saying, "How dare you, sir?" They want House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to engage in one last desperate scheme: not sending the articles of impeachment to the Senate.

Latching on to this odd idea are the likes of Harvard Law Professor Laurence Tribe, Democratic superstar Michael Avenatti, former Florida lobbyist and congressman David Jolly, former Breitbart flack Kurt Bardella, and others. The idea is that holding onto the articles to demand that McConnell commit to an "open and fair trial" will put pressure on senators in swing states facing reelection in 2020 to follow suit. That list includes Sens. Susan Collins of Maine, Cory Gardner of Colorado, and Martha McSally of Arizona, to name a few.

The only thing missing from this idea is the scheduling of the clown-shoe fitting for those advocating for this desperation move.

Play Video

The major problem in this latest scheme to get Trump out of office is that the House has no say over how the Senate conducts an impeachment trial. If McConnell wants to pay homage to the O.J. Simpson trial and have the Dancing Jtos perform for everyone and serve as witnesses, he can do that. The revered Constitution gives the Senate "sole power to try all impeachments." That means it's McConnell's gig.

When Republicans offered up complaints about the House impeachment process, the chorus of "Deal with it!" echoed from the halls of Congress to the television studios of CNN and MSNBC and the newsrooms of the Washington Post and the New York Times.

What goes around comes around, I suppose.

I've said many times, both publicly and in private, that public opinion would have to shift in a significant way for there to be a chance to get a simple majority in the Senate to vote for removal, let alone the requisite two-thirds majority. That figure would have to be 66% or higher. As it stands, the RealClearPolitics polling for impeachment and removal is at 47%, with those opposing at 48%.

It won't make much of a difference because once again, the commentariat and other insiders don't get that people aren't sitting around saying, "Well, Cory Gardner won't put pressure on Mitch McConnell to offer up a fair impeachment trial, so I am definitely voting against him!"

If reverence for the Constitution and the oath senators take are so sacrosanct, perhaps they should reach out to some Democrats, including Democratic presidential candidates Elizabeth Warren, Amy Klobuchar, and Michael Bennett. All have implied they'd vote to convict Trump even before the impeachment articles passed the House.

The "hold the articles" gambit is a terrific example of Washington insider nonsense that is a nonstarter in the hinterlands or even the suburbs. The idea will fail, and McConnell will sit back smiling and think of Napoleon Bonaparte, who said, "Never interrupt your enemy when he is making a mistake."

[HYPERLINK "https://magicvalley.com/opinion/columnists/jim-jones-idaho-voters-can-help-stop-russian-interference-in/article_f19b6a34-dc20-5252-a944-8e0e37d02133.html"]

Jim Jones

Idaho voters are uniquely positioned to influence Congressional passage of a bill to stop Russia from trying to corrupt our elections. The bipartisan Defending Elections from Threats by Establishing Redlines (DETER) Act would impose serious economic sanctions against Russia for election interference. The sanctions would be substantially stronger than those presently in place.

The DETER Act requires the Director of National Intelligence to determine, within 60 days after a federal election, whether a foreign government interfered. If so, sanctions would be imposed against the offending government.

If Russia was the government responsible for the election attack, tough sanctions would automatically be imposed against a wide array of Russian individuals and entities within 30 days of the DNI's finding. Several of the largest Russian banks would be cut off from the U.S. financial system. Russian entities in the energy, defense and government sectors would have any property within U.S. control blocked or frozen so they could not do business with it. The sanctions would remain in place for at least 8 years.

These automatic, long-lasting sanctions would have a strong deterrent effect on the Russians, making them think more than twice before meddling into our elections again. The bill is co-sponsored by six Republican Senators and five Democrats.

The bill is currently awaiting action in both houses of Congress. The Senate version, S. 1060, is in the Senate Banking Committee. Sen. Mike Crapo is chairman of the committee, so Idaho voters can have a strong say in whether the bill moves forward. Sen. Jim Risch is chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a member of the Republican-led Senate Intelligence Committee. The Intel Committee released a sobering report on Oct. 8, warning that sweeping new action is necessary to protect our elections. Sen. Risch obviously knows how important S. 1060 is in safeguarding the integrity of our election process.

Sen. Crapo halted Senate consideration of the bill on Dec. 10, asserting it should be reviewed by his committee. That may be fair, but he claimed the bill was "more to attack the Trump administration and Republicans than to attack the Russians." If that is true, it is odd that the bill has more Republican sponsors than Democrats. Republican Sen. Martha McSally, an Air Force combat veteran, signed on as the latest sponsor on Sept. 23.

Crapo also said, "economic sanctions legislation is a two-edged sword. It hurts the United States and our allies often as much as it hurts the entities sanctioned." It is hard to see how stiff sanctions on the Russians for trying to pervert our elections could hurt the U.S. or our allies. We and our allies have already imposed sanctions on Russia for a wide range of aggressive misconduct. It is a significant sore spot for the Russian president because of the adverse impact on Russia's economy. We just need to squeeze him harder until he stops attacking us.

President Trump has imposed sanctions against Iran, North Korea, Venezuela, Russia, Syria, Turkey and any number of other countries. He has threatened them against many others, including Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. It is doubtful that sanctions would be his weapon of choice if they harmed our interests.

Idaho voters can and should let our two influential Senators know that we expect them to use their best efforts to get S. 1060 to the Senate floor for a vote well before next year's election. Our intelligence agencies report that the

Russians are already interfering and we must have a much stronger deterrent to discourage them. Our precious representative form of government is under attack and we should employ every means available to defend it. Let's let Sens. Crapo and Risch know we expect them to work hard for passage of this important legislation.

[[HYPERLINK "https://azjewishpost.com/2019/jewish-latino-teen-coalition-to-celebrate-quinceanera/"](https://azjewishpost.com/2019/jewish-latino-teen-coalition-to-celebrate-quinceanera/)]

Debe Campbell

Over its 15-year history, the Jewish-Latino Teen Coalition has changed the lives of 176 teens from Southern Arizona's Jewish and Latino communities. The nationally recognized youth leadership program fosters political advocacy and cultural awareness in both the Tucson community and the nation. The group will celebrate its 15th anniversary with a quinceañera party next month and honor its founders Paul Baker and Humberto Lopez.

The coalition was born after a fact-finding tour of the two communities by local lay and agency leaders and Arizona Rep. Raul Grijalva, recalls Shari Gootter, a local therapist and the group's passionate volunteer leader for the past 13 years. Lew Hamburger, Ph.D., has been at her side for the past nine years. The group's overriding concern was about children and the future. Local businessmen and philanthropists Baker and Lopez committed to funding the coalition for three years, Gootter says.

Today, JLTC is funded by the Jewish Federation of Southern Arizona through the support of private donors and a grant from the Jewish Community Foundation. "It's a unique program — the only Jewish-Latino teen program of its kind on a national level," says JFSA President and CEO Stuart Mellan. "It's been important in grooming a new generation of civic-minded activists, and it's been a wonderful vehicle for fostering friendships and understanding in our local Jewish and Latino communities."

"We celebrated the 10th anniversary and the 13th year with a b'nai mitzvah," says Gootter. "The quinceañera is to celebrate Baker and Lopez. When I asked them if we could honor them in this way, instead of just saying yes, these busy and humble individuals turned around and offered to sponsor the event. There aren't words to express the value of their continuing commitment to changing the lives of so many kids. This took their dedication and philanthropy to a new level."

Competitive applications open each fall. After rigorous interviews, a selection committee builds a diverse, multi-gendered, multi-ethnic group that commits to months of education and weekly workshops, growing knowledge and skills for advocacy and leadership. JLTC launched its 16th cohort on Dec. 15 with a family dinner and cultural exchange. This year's participants come from seven different high schools.

"They learn to discuss, disagree, understand, work together, and share openly and honestly. It's an experience of self-reflection, exploration and learning more about themselves through the group. My favorite thing to watch is the kids start out one way and end up another," Gootter says of the process. "The kids are changed in so many different ways, sometimes you just don't know how."

As the teens explore, they select a compelling policy issue. Then, local leaders engage them in workshop dialogues "to educate them on that issue, along with how to advocate and lobby policymakers," Gootter says. Last year's focus was on immigration issues. Students were able to volunteer in local shelters to interact with migrants and get a first-hand view of the issue.

"One of our students, who could speak personally on the subject of immigration as her parents had been deported, spoke at a pre-immigration rally conference," says Gootter. "The conference happened to take place in the building where Martin Luther King drafted the Civil Rights Act and was attended by over a hundred people, in large part rabbis and clergy."

Four months of weekly learning culminates in a trip to Washington to employ lobbying skills in the offices of senators and congressmen on Capitol Hill. "One year we had the very special opportunity to be escorted to Sen. John McCain's secret hideaway in the Capitol. The students all met, spoke with, and enjoyed meeting McCain," says Gootter.

Last year was the students' most robust Capitol Hill tour, Gootter said. They had one-on-one visits with Reps. Grijalva, Pramila Jayapal, Ann Kirkpatrick, Dan Crenshaw, Sharice Davids, and Sens. Martha McSally, Kyrsten Sinema, Lindsey Graham, Tammy Duckworth, Cory Booker, and Catherine Cortez Masto. JLTC alum Andrea Kippur hosted a dinner for the group.

Lisa Kondrat was a member of JLTC's first cohort in 2004-5. After university, she returned to Tucson and is on the administrative team at The Gregory School. "I had quite a few leadership opportunities in high school but JLTC was impactful enough that 10 years later I wanted to get involved again," she says. Kondrat has been a JLTC program and logistics coordinator and trainer for the past nine years. "I go to the weekly workshops, schedule the D.C. meetings and work closely with Shari." There are a million things that made her want to come back to the program, she says. "The essence is the impact opportunity it provides for students, but more often it just has to be experienced, to see it is to believe it. To watch a group of 10-12 strangers in the fall culminate into a bonded, cohesive group, going from shy kids to a machine that works for the common good."

Peris Lopez was a member of the 14th cohort. She now is majoring in culture and politics in her first year at Georgetown University. Attending school in Washington was "nowhere in my mind before JLTC," she says. Lopez was an intern/mentor for the group last year. "My group has a deep place in my heart. They are some of the closest friendships I've ever created. JLTC became everything for me, it became an avenue where I could actually make a difference," she told the AJP. She found mentoring empowering and enlightening. "It was cool to watch their growth in personal relationships and passion for advocacy." Lopez looks forward to meeting group 16 in D.C. next year "to see what they are passionate about. It's so incredible to see how it inspires them. I am so grateful for the JLTC experience."

"We never know how one experience will change our path," says Gootter. "I am so grateful to so many people who make it possible year after year."

The free quinceañera celebration is Sunday, Jan. 5 from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Harvey and Deanna Evenchik Center for Jewish Philanthropy, 3718 E. River Road. There will be hors d'oeuvres, margaritas, mariachis, and klezmer music. Reservations are required by Monday, Dec. 30 at www.jfsa.org/JLAT.

[HYPERLINK "https://tucson.com/opinion/letters/letters-to-the-editor/article_78b856d9-2d65-587c-94a8-4195e52aeb33.html"]

McSally should honor her juror's oath

Senators will soon be swearing a special juror's oath to conduct impeachment hearings impartially. I contacted Martha McSally's office to ask whether the senator plans to honor her juror's oath and her Senate oath to protect the Constitution by calling for impartial hearings and testimony from witnesses who have information about the Ukraine issue.

Since Sen. Mitch McConnell has already made it clear he would not honor his, I was interested whether McSally would honor hers. Her staff responded that she "has no position statement" on whether she will honor her oath. This is a curious response to a fundamental "process" question, since congressional Republicans have been entirely focused on process, not substance, on this issue. Yet they won't commit to honoring their sworn oaths?

That's dereliction of duty, plain and simple. And the public should know about it.

Jeff Anderson

Foothills

[HYPERLINK "<https://www.horsetalk.co.nz/2019/12/20/backing-anti-doping-racing-bill-us/>"]

The patchwork quilt of racing jurisdictions across the United States may soon be under uniform anti-doping regulations, after support for a House bill garnered a crucial majority of co-sponsors.

The Horseracing Integrity Act of 2019 would create a national anti-doping authority that would be independent of existing racing regulators.

The legislation now exceeds 218 co-sponsors, which is a majority of the 435 voting members of the House.

The bill was introduced in the House by Representatives Paul Tonko (D-NY) and Andy Barr (R-KY).

"Bi-partisan support from more than 218 members is a critical milestone because it demonstrates to House leadership that the bill will pass on the House floor," said the executive director of the Coalition for Horse Racing Integrity, Shawn Smeallie.

The coalition is an umbrella group for a diverse group of racing organizations, racetracks, owner and breeder associations, and animal welfare groups that support passage of the Act.

"Clearly Congress recognizes that the current patchwork quilt of state regulations that govern the industry is failing and an effective anti-doping program with a national set of drug standards is needed to bring equine safety and integrity back to the sport."

The bill is being considered by the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce. It is supported by the chair and original co-sponsor, Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL).

Other key members such as Representatives Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and Vern Buchanan (R-FL), co-chairs of the Congressional Animal Protection Caucus, strongly support the bill.

Following passage by the sub and full committees, the bill would advance to the House floor for a vote by the House of Representatives.

The Act will create a private, independent horse racing anti-doping authority, the Horseracing Anti-Doping and Medication Control Authority, responsible for developing and administering a nationwide anti-doping and medication control program for horse racing.

The new authority will create a set of uniform anti-doping rules, including lists of permitted and prohibited substances and methods in line with international anti-doping standards and veterinarian ethical standards.

The new nationwide rules would replace the current state-by-state regulatory mechanism that governs horse racing's 38 separate racing jurisdictions.

The act was originally introduced by Congressmen Barr and Tonko in 2015 and was re-introduced by them in 2017 and 2019.

The 2017 version contained many refinements that were the result of collaborations among the Coalition for Horse Racing Integrity, horseracing industry constituents, and other interested parties.

The amended 2017 version of the bill, which is nearly identical to the current version, modified the 2015 version to:

- Ensure that there would be no effect on the Interstate Horseracing Act of 1978;
- Increase the number of board members on the new authority with horse racing-related expertise;
- Feature standing technical advisory committees, including active members from the racing industry;
- Strengthen protections against retrospective enforcement of the rules before the act came into force;
- Provide the industry with a "safety valve: to affect alternative regulatory approaches; and
- Include a ban on the use of medication on race days.

"Momentum is building to reform the horse racing industry and establish a meaningful and effective drug control program," continued Smeallie.

"This past year highlighted many of the challenges facing the horse racing industry, and the Horseracing Integrity Act will go a long way to improving the health of our equine athletes."

The new authority would be governed by a board composed of six individuals who have shown expertise in a variety of horse racing areas, six individuals from the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), and the USADA's chief executive.

The USADA is recognized by Congress as the official anti-doping agency for US Olympic, Pan American, and Paralympic sports.

A companion bill has been introduced in the Senate by Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Martha McSally (R-AZ). It currently has 17 co-sponsors.

Passage of the House bill will help move the bill through the Senate.

The advocacy group Animal Wellness Action described the 218th cosponsor as a milestone for what it said was landmark legislation.

The bill, it said, would end the doping of American racehorses in competition.

"We're thrilled to see the Horseracing Integrity Act, one of our top priorities in the 116th Congress, hit this mile marker," said the group's executive director, Marty Irby.

"American horseracing has dealt itself a self-inflicted wound, and Congress must pass this legislation quickly, or the debate will shift away from eliminating abuses in horseracing to eliminating horseracing itself."

Horse racing in the US is currently regulated by 38 different racing jurisdictions, which limits regulators' effective management of the many issues involved in the health and safety of racehorses.

The group said the new anti-doping body created under the legislation would help ensure racehorses were free from performance-enhancing drugs during racing and training, creating a safer environment for horses and jockeys.

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